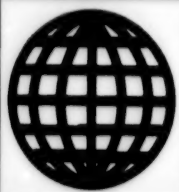


JPRS-NEA-93-104  
19 October 1993



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# ***JPRS Report***

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# **Near East & South Asia**

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***INDIA***

# Near East & South Asia

## INDIA

JPRS-NEA-93-104

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19 October 1993

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## International Affairs

### Huge Arms Consignment From U.S. Seized

93AS0948A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE  
in English 1 May 93 p 9

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, April 30 (PTI): In a sensational arms seizure, the Customs authorities made a rich haul of hundreds of pistols in a disassembled state from a big consignment which arrived in the capital from the United States.

The Customs authorities detained six persons for interrogation after the seizure and the investigations handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation. [CBI]

About 1,000 pistols could be assembled out of the spares recovered from four large boxes marked 'metal scraps' from a container at the international container depot of the customs Department, the sources said, adding that the seizure was effected following a random check by the officials earlier this week.

The consignment, which came from an American firm, was ordered by 'Ferro Alloy', a company based in Delhi's G.T. Karnal Road. The container contained nine boxes, with five containing metal scraps.

All three directors of the firm, Sandip Kumar, Chaman Goyal and Govind Gupta, were among those detained and interrogated. The others detained were two clearing agents, Sushil Goyal and Balbir Singh Ganghi, and the Indian representative of the Houston-based firm 'A & A Metal Company', Hari Aggarwal, the sources said.

The sources said though the entire import process "looked bonafide as the importers had the required licences, a design behind the import cannot be ruled out."

The investigation had been handed over to the CBI which was expected to register a case soon, the sources added.

The CBI was expected to coordinate with the national security agencies, besides the Interpol, to ascertain the possible link with the Memon family or the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan ramifications of the latest seizure.

The spare parts could be easily assembled into pistols, along with some minor parts which were freely available in the country, the sources said.

The seizures were effected when Customs officials made a random check of the containers at the depot. Out of a consignment of four large packets marked 'metal scrap', three contained pistol spares.

Officials of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) were working in close coordination with the Customs authorities on the latest seizure.

Ballistic experts from the Army and National Security Guards (NSG) were reported to be examining the arms to ascertain their origin, the sources said.

The seizure comes in the wake of the admission by the Bombay police that all the consignments of explosives and arms which landed in the coastal villages of Maharashtra's Raigad district had not been recovered.

Following the March 12 chain of blasts in Bombay, the alerting of the intelligence agencies had led to the arrests of several suspects and recovery of large cache of arms, including AK-56 rifles and grenades, and explosive materials like the RDX.

Meanwhile the members in the Rajya Sabha demanded that the Home Minister make a statement on the reported seizure of sophisticated arms from the container depot here in Pragati Maidan, imported from the U.S by a cargo company.

Making a special mention, Mr. Ram Naresh Yadav (Congress) said Customs officials had seized the cargo which had come under the consignment of steel scrap.

"It was a serious matter and the government should come out with a statement," he said.

Supporting him, Mr. Jagesh Desai (Congress) said the government should make a statement on the issue and specify which company in India had contracted the consignment.

### U.S. Pressure Against Rocket Technology Transfer Attacked

#### U.S. Paternalism

93AS1039A Varanasi AJ in Hindi 13 Jul 93 p 6

[Article: "American Hooliganism and Cryogenic Engine"]

[Text] After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States of America began to practice a high-handed policy over other countries. The latest example of this type of politics is its pressure on Russia on the technical transfer and sale of cryogenic rocket engines to India. News reports about this increasing pressure and its results have been published in Indian and foreign newspapers. Most of the news reports are basically different from each other. For example, some news reports made known that Russia has decided to cancel this deal because of increasing U.S. pressure. Meanwhile, other news stories said that Russia is not ready to bow down to U.S. pressure, and that it is adamant about transferring the technology and selling cryogenic rocket engines to India. The facts will emerge in their entirety to relieve all these rumors one day, but it is clear at this point that the top



Russian leadership is going through heavy pressure at this time. This pressure is working against this new international political background. The United States has become the primary economic power in the world (in spite of competition with Japan), and is also the world's only superpower. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, its main successor, Russia, is suffering from major social, economic, and political crises. At this time the mutually opposed groups are occupied in a decisive battle there. The high-level Russian leadership, especially Yeltsin and his associates, are depending on U.S. economic aid more and more now, and this affects their independent decision making. Still, they are opposing this pressure on a limited basis, as is evident by the recent cancellation of the Russian prime minister's visit to the United States of America.

Political observers believe that during the meeting of the Group of Seven nations leaders in Tokyo, U.S. President Clinton discussed this important issue with President Yeltsin. In order to force the Russian president to drop the sale of cryogenic rocket engines and the transfer of technology, the question of economic aid to Russia was left hanging in the Japanese capital. If we join this fact with other available information, we can say that Russia will lose if it does not complete this deal with India. The United States will fulfill this deal, and then we will be able to see the tip of the iceberg in this problem of pressure politics. Any analytical person can recognize this and can imagine the impact of this practice.

The United States is also pressuring India as well as Russia. Political observers believe that the U.S. leadership has clearly pressured the Indian leadership since the actual agreement has already been signed. Perhaps India will be allowed to buy cryogenic engines. It will use them to launch satellites; however, as for the question of transferring this technology, India must be prepared to be deprived of it.

The politics of U.S. pressure does not stop here either. The United States wants India to guarantee that it will accept international monitoring of the use of the two cryogenic rocket engines, so that India's goals are transparent and monitored. The U.S. wants to make sure that these engines are not used to expand satellite technology. In order to understand the U.S. heavy-handed policy, it is important to know that the United States knows well that India has its own technology for building satellites. Therefore, from the point of building missiles, the cryogenic engine techniques and the engines do not have much importance. Still, the United States wants to put additional pressure on India. It also knows that India already has the third and largest solid fuel space engine.

From the beginning the United States has opposed this agreement between Russia and India over the cryogenic rocket engine sale and technology transfer. In the context of this opposition, it put restrictions on the Indian and Russian governments' space research centers. The

United States was not satisfied with this action, and considered it important to follow up on its high-handed policies.

Political observers consider that there are three reasons behind the U.S. opposition to the sale of cryogenic engines and transfer of the related technology. First, U.S. sources say that some new contracts and sub-contracts between Russia and India have been signed. They claim that U.S. laws require the rulers to take action in this context, and if this action is not effective, then they must take some "punitive steps."

The second reason is related to a recent trip made by Dr. U.R. Rao, director of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). It is being said that in spite of the government's restrictions, many private U.S. organizations want to sell at least the technology that is not related to cryogenic engines to India. The U.S. Government is upset over it and has adopted an attitude of active opposition and imposing restrictions.

The observers believe that the third reason is that this opposition to the sale of cryogenic engines and transfer of technology is a part of the a much more wide-spread opposition. They refer to the increasing business competition hinted in recent statements by a major official of the IMF. It is said that Russia wants to attain the same level the Soviet Union had in the weapons market. This endangers the monopoly of the United States and other Western nations in the international weapons and technology markets. This danger points to the mutual competition among countries with rocket technology. The black shadow of this competition is falling on the sale of cryogenic engines and the transfer of technology.

Whatever the reason, it is clear that the United States has started to show its blind opposition against India over such issues as human rights, nuclear non-proliferation treaties, and according to U.S. experts, even more importantly, the sale of cryogenic rocket engines. This stand is not sudden, without reason, or unexpected.

#### **Violation of National Sovereignty**

*93AS1039B Varanasi AJ in Hindi 12 Jul 93 p 6*

[Editorial: "American Pressure and the Rocket Saga"]

[Text] The agreement signed between India and Russia over the sale of cryogenic rocket engines is once again being openly discussed. During the Tokyo summit, Russian President Yeltsin and the U.S. President had talks. Details of these talks are not available; however, the differences between these two leaders were apparent. President Clinton is adamant that the agreement with India be canceled, while Yeltsin is not willing to back off from this agreement. The economic situation in Russia is very bad now. At the Tokyo summit, an announcement of \$3 billion in aid to Russia was made. Most of this aid is being given by the United States and western European countries. This should naturally influence Russia. Therefore, all kinds of questions are being raised about

this agreement, and demands for clarification are also being made. Recently, Professor U.R. Rao, director of the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization], went to Moscow to finalize this agreement. During that time, news came from Moscow that it still supported this agreement. India also believed that in spite of U.S. pressure, Russia will not back off from its promise. After the Tokyo talks, a new situation is developing. It is natural to be worried in light of that.

Russian President Yeltsin has hinted about talks with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao on this issue. Actually, before leaving for Tokyo, Mr. Yeltsin wrote a letter to Mr. Rao and asked for assurance that Western nations' concerns would be neutralized. While mentioning the Western nations' worries, he asked for an assurance that Rao would accept the directives proposed for restrictions on missile technology. The Indian prime minister called that arrangement unfair and did not agree. This also affected India's autonomy and sovereignty. That is why India does not agree to these terms. India expressed its willingness to consider the issue of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and control over missiles. Actually, it supports the concept of restricting all nuclear weapons. It is hoped that Mr. Yeltsin will present Mr. Rao's opinion to Mr. Clinton. Even after that, the demand of the Indian prime minister that rocket technology be discussed hints clearly towards U.S. pressure. Meanwhile, the Russian foreign minister opposed this agreement from the beginning. Therefore, they are talking about the possibility of Moscow stopping talks about this agreement at the last minute.

The rocket agreement was made when the Soviet Union still existed. The India-Soviet Union peace, cooperation, and friendship agreement was still in effect. Soviet-Russia helped India like a good friend during India's difficult times, and history supports it. India's unique desire and efforts for world peace are known to Russia. Not only Russia, but all countries in the world, are familiar with India's efforts at peace, cooperation, and friendship. India has shown full faith in UN peace efforts, and we do not have to offer any proof to support it. The thought that India would abuse its rocket technology and harm other countries through its knowledge of space research is unfounded. India had demanded from the very beginning in the United Nations that all nuclear weapons be destroyed, and it still has the same viewpoint. The rocket technology agreement that India signed with Russia is just to expand its space knowledge. India has not attacked any country for expanding its borders during the last 45 years. Of course, it fought back bravely against Pakistani and Chinese attacks. Therefore, it is clear that the United States, by opposing the cryogenic rocket engine deal, is only maintaining its monopoly in the international market. The United States itself is willing to provide rocket technology to India and wants to charge high prices for it. Now that India has signed an agreement with Russia for obtaining rocket research technology at cheaper rates, the United

States is upset. India cannot compromise its autonomy and independence in any situation.

#### **U.S. Decision on Pakistan's Support of Terrorism Attacked**

93AS1042A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
16 Jul 93 p 4

[Editorial: "America's Fatwah"]

[Text] What is terrorism, and who has the right to control it? The United States has decided that it has the monopoly on making decisions on this question. According to American thought, there is a standard that if a group or nation works against the short- and long-term interests of the United States, or even threatens to do so, then that group or country is definitely a terrorist one. In this context, human rights and terrorism are like hand and glove to each other. If the United States attacks Korea and uses destructive weapons such as napalm bombs and drops gases destructive to vegetables in the jungle, this is neither terrorism nor a violation of human rights. But if the Soviet Union sends its armed forces at the invitation of the Afghanistan Government, then there is a violation of human rights. The United States does not only decide what is terrorism, but also controls the right to deal with it. The incident in Iraq is solid proof of this attitude. After becoming the judge and giving out the punishment, it also plays the role of the policeman, ensuring that the punishment is carried out. Even here, it is kept in mind that U.S. interests are fully protected. The Kurds had been persecuted for years in Iraq. During the last decade, Saddam Husayn even tried to use gases on these people. However, the United States did not think it necessary to punish Saddam Husayn about these persecuted people. It just continued to ignore the issue by glossing over it. The reason is clear. Turkey objects to the freedom of the Kurds, and it is a member of NATO, the U.S. military pact.

In this situation, U.S. spokesman Mike Mercury says that Warren Christopher, U.S. secretary of state, has received reliable information that Pakistan has stopped giving assistance to the terrorists of Kashmir and Punjab. It must then be concluded that Pakistan has straightened itself out, and therefore, it is not necessary to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. What sources informed Christopher does not have to be discussed here. It is clear that he was informed by the U.S. intelligence agency, the CIA, or by John Mallot, director of South Asian Affairs. Mallot visited India recently. The way he ignored the question about Pakistani terrorism and accused India of violating human rights left no doubt that the United States would not declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. Mallot also warned at the time that U.S.-India relations could be affected over the human rights issue. He warned in clear words that U.S. senators and congressmen ask why the United States does not stop economic aid to India. In other words, the purpose of John Mallot's visit to India and Pakistan was not to warn Pakistan, but to threaten India.

The United States, under the Pressler Amendment two years ago, stopped annual military aid to Pakistan. It has

also suspended the delivery of the second batch of F-16 jet planes. The Indian newspapers gave a lot of importance to this. The action was important; however, we did not understand the meaning of this action. The main U.S. purpose was to keep India guessing. The U.S. experts have guessed that India was moving toward a liberal economic system, and that this process would accelerate after the fall of the Soviet Union. Because of the recession and increasing unemployment, the United States needs entry into the Indian market. Therefore, it was important that the Indian government change all those rules and restrictions that, in U.S. eyes, hindered American corporations. It uses both fear and greed for this purpose. Adopting a stricter attitude toward Pakistan was just to assure India about U.S. policy, and it began reemphasizing Super-301 to keep India in line. However, the United States was never serious about stopping Pakistan from making nuclear bombs. Even after military aid was stopped, Pakistan did not have any dearth of weapons, and it did not change its nuclear bomb program either. All the noise about declaring Pakistan a terrorist nation is purely a game of issuing statements and newspaper propaganda. The U.S. administration did not only announce that it would keep an eye on Pakistan because of India's complaints, but also received solid proof of Pakistan's terrorist activities that India supplied. There is proof of Pakistani involvement in the Indian bomb blasts also, but Christopher says that Pakistan has stopped providing assistance to the Kashmiri terrorists. The truth is that Pakistan is still following that path. It is not succeeding in Punjab because the Punjabi people refused to be duped by Pakistan, and not because Pakistan has stopped interfering there. It is using the religious issue in Kashmir and is using the Kashmiri separatists for its successful operation. The fact is that by ending its monitoring of Pakistan, the United States is indirectly encouraging more Pakistani interference in Kashmir.

#### **U.S. Pressure on Russia To Halt Rocket Technology Criticized**

##### **Insult Requires Response**

93AS1064A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
19 Jul 93 p 4

[Editorial: "The Answer to This Insult"]

[Text] The Russian space agency, Glavcosmos, handed over a paper to Ronen Sen, the Indian ambassador stationed in Moscow, and instantly broke the agreement made two and one-half years ago. The only regret they expressed was that they were unable to provide India one more cryogenic engine and the technology related to it, for unavoidable reasons. In diplomatic protocol, one does not have to explain one's actions. India could not even express how it was hurt by the breaking of this agreement by citing its friendship with Russia or that the agreement was broken because of U.S. pressure. The truth in the real world is that the United States told Russia last year that it did not want rocket technology to

be spread, and that it should not sell cryogenic technology. It should not transfer technical knowledge either. Russia did not agree with the United States, so they later imposed restrictions on the Russian-Indian space agreements. The United States has been putting pressure on Russia regularly since then. Russia remained adamant just because of its old agreements, relations, and friendship with India. It wanted to sell its rocket technology on the international market in order to compete with the United States and become more economically self-dependent. However, the Russian economy is in a precarious state, and President Yeltsin is under regular pressure from the elected parliament and its speaker, Khasbulatov. The affluent Western nations have helped Yeltsin through his economic and political crisis. The United States leads other countries in this effort and has promised \$450 billion in aid to Russia. It will give \$30 billion now. During the recent summit meeting in Tokyo, U.S. President Clinton put so much pressure on the Russian president that he promised to break the Russian agreement with India to supply it with cryogenic engines and technical knowledge.

The Indian Government and the opposition are angry and upset at this treatment by Russia and the United States, and all of them have condemned this attitude. The government of India announced that in spite of this agreement being null and void, it will not stop its space program, and will continue to use satellites in space. Last year, when the United States imposed restrictions, the prime minister said that we would develop our own technology and continue to expand our space development program. The time has come to implement these decisions and announcements with full determination and resolve. The United States knows that these engines cannot be used to make these rockets, which can launch nuclear bombs and missiles. Still, it forced Russia to break the agreement. The United States of America will not let us get this technology from anywhere. Therefore, we must find ways to develop our own technology—whether in desperation or just because we want it. This is important for not just for our scientific and economic progress. The United States of America, with its pressure, and Russia, by accepting this pressure, have treated us like the "poor man's sister-in-law," and we cannot maintain our pride without responding to this treatment in a suitable manner. We must tell both the United States and Russia that we do not depend on them. China told them so, and they are both very careful and now approach it with respect. First of all, we must tell Russia to keep the second cryogenic engine; we do not need it. We should tell the United States that it is inappropriate for it not to trust us, even though it knew all the facts. We must tell it that we do not need its charity. We should tell them this, and while we are giving them this message, we should make the engines here, and shoot into space the satellite that the United States want us to stop. India cannot respond in any other way.



### Unwarranted Interference

93AS1064B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
22 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Prabhash Joshi: "If Not Then They Twist Our Tail"]

[Text] The United States finally forced Russia not to supply a cryogenic engine and the technology to manufacture it to India. At the same time, it announced that it would not declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. You may call it whatever you like in diplomatic terms, but this is not the reaction of a friendly nation. It is a condemnable act, and it does not matter what kind of "holy mark is placed on its forehead," India must remember that the United States is not its friend, and we shall treat it as one king treats another.

We should also understand that we cannot trust Russia anymore. Russia is not the descendent of the Soviet Union, on which newly developing countries had a lot of faith to help them stand on their own feet. Russia is a weak European nation that lacks the strength and desire to stand up to the United States of America. Yeltsin needs not only economic, but also political aid from the West in order to survive. The Western nations, especially the United States, will take the full price from him when they give him this aid. Russia is in no position to maintain its friendship with India, and it is forced to accept U.S. pressure in implementing its own long-range plans.

The United States is the only superpower in the world now, and the Soviet Union may have disintegrated into 15 small and weak countries now. It did help us a lot after our independence. Can we afford to live without them, and if we can should we? We have to keep in mind the realities of the present world, and go by the demands of practicality and diplomacy. We may make as much noise as we want, but we should not get upset at the U.S.'s insulting action of pressuring Russia to break its agreement with India, and we should also understand the Russian helplessness. After all, one has to understand a friend's helplessness, and one cannot live without friends in this world. I have no disagreement with this wise advice.

However, the way Mr. Gandhi explained the difference between the non-violence of a brave man and the non-violence of a weak man, we must be determined to become self-dependent, and we should not try to be friendly with a country that made friends with different countries at different times, just to get aid. We do not have to become thankless just because Russia has become weak and turned into a nobody after its disintegration. However, even if we look from the perspective of self-dependence, our dependence on the Soviet Union was not a friendship with a powerful nation. It was that of a nation in limbo over its political philosophy, one which was looking for a strong shoulder to free it from the fear of falling down.

Nehru's India did not want to follow the capitalist path and become a follower of the United States. It could not do that even if it wanted to, because after fighting British imperialism for 90 years, it just could not join the U.S. camp. Had it tried to do so, it would have done it by negating the independence campaign and breaking its promise of becoming an independent, self-dependent, and proud nation. Therefore, Nehru was correct by not making India another country that paid homage in the U.S. royal court. However, his Fabian socialism also allowed him to avoid establishing a merciless centralization and total government control, like that of the Soviet Union and China. If Nehru had total faith in Gandhian thought or India's own path and had a strong character like Mao, then he would have taken a different path than communism and capitalism. Had this happened, then India would have reached much higher plateaus than China, which was born after the revolution that took place two years after our independence. But Nehru lacked the philosophic and character strengths that Gandhi and Mao had.

It is not true that Nehru lacked the desire and skill to find a new path for India. He definitely had the original ideas and strength to start and promote the neutral bloc in the world, which was divided into two groups during the Cold War. In this context, he was one of the major leaders of Asia and the world. However, the neutral bloc was a practical strategy in a world divided into two blocs. It derived its validity and strength from the two enemy blocs pitted against one another. Neutrality was practiced in India, and it is a negligible concept, just like secularism. Now that there is no world divided into two, the idea of a neutral bloc has also lost its appeal. If it was an appropriate and powerful concept, then it would be able to put some hold on the United States of America now. It does not matter that this policy was touted as in announcements in propaganda; the policy of neutrality was the Congress Party's international policy, just as it practiced at the Center by staying a little to the left. In other words, it stood against a superpower, the United States of America, and also had friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

In India, its practical meaning was considering the Soviet Union a friend and depending on it. This dependence did not allow us to stand on our own feet, the way China managed to succeed, despite being a communist nation. As a result of our dependence on the Soviet Union for about 40 years, the United States has no respect for us, and Russia does not consider India's friendship a top priority. After making some noise and understanding the practical reality and the demands of diplomacy, the attitude we adopt towards the United States and Russia will be just that of a weak nation. The comments of our foreign minister, who was sick and weak at that time, made in the Foreign Ministry's Parliamentary Advisory Committee were published in the newspaper. They clearly indicate that India is helpless, and that it cannot do anything to find a positive and respectable path from out of the situation created by the



aggressive U.S. attitude and Russian helplessness. Now, I am not talking about sword play in an arena; I am talking about keeping a stiff upper lip and making a strong commitment. We never made such a commitment after independence. Before the Bangladesh War, Indira Gandhi showed some strength, but only after making a defense pact with the Soviet Union. Now we cannot sign an agreement with any country to stand up against the high-handedness of the United States. We cannot even organize the small and developing nations against it. We have to deal with the U.S. high-handedness as a single nation. Neither Narasimha Rao nor Lal Krishna Advani can lead us in the effort to stand proudly in this struggle. This is not the time of great leaders, and there is no such leader in our country. The whole nation and its people have to make a decision. We must understand the real meanings of what the United States did and what Russia did not do before we take any steps.

Not only Professor Rao, chief of the Indian Space Research Organization, but any scientist or other person knowledgeable about rocket technology, can tell you that the cryogenic engine and the associated technology that Russia was going to give us could not have enabled us to launch missiles or nuclear bombs. Yes, we could do further research and develop this technology to launch missiles and bombs. Not only U.S. scientists, but also the diplomats, know that the cryogenic technology did not worry the United States of America. We were not breaking the agreement that it made with its seven friendly nations, to restrict rocket technology to a few countries. This is not an international agreement either. Neither Russia nor India has agreed to it. Therefore, the United States cannot force the decision it made with its friendly nations. The first fact is that after purchasing the Russian cryogenic engine and the technology for manufacturing it, India cannot launch nuclear missiles on Pakistan or China. This technology is needed for launching satellites in space. These satellites not only give weather information, but also make our communications system our own. This will also give us information about defense preparations by other countries. That is all we want. However, the United States has deprived us of achieving this in the near future.

It is interesting to note that it cannot stop us from launching the satellites. It can only delay this effort, and it did just that. The United States wants to control what India does in space research and what Russia gives to which country. It is willing to help India in its space research; however, what India should do or not do will be decided by the United States of America, and not by India. If anyone equals the United States in space research and technology, it is Russia. Russia, by selling its technology, can reduce its dependence on the United States and affluent Western nations. But the United States does not want many nations to attain missile technology, and it does not want Russia to become independent by being its competitor in the international technology market. Therefore, it took advantage of Russia's helplessness and twisted its arm so much over the

India deal that Russia gave in. Thus, the United States achieved two goals by dismissing the cryogenic deal: It stopped India's efforts at independence and also tightened its grip on Russia's neck.

America, however, could not do anything to China. The United States made an agreement with its allies on rocket technology six years ago. Afterwards, China sold 30 launching accessories and 60 missiles, capable of launching rockets to other countries. The United States did not stop it. Recently, China supplied Pakistan with M-11 missiles and related technology. Pakistan is expanding its technology with this help. Two years ago, China imposed restrictions both on Pakistan and China. The two-year restriction on China was lifted after only one year, however, and the restriction on Pakistan was also lifted after some time. Saudi Arabia is gradually developing and expanding its missile technology. The United States cannot do anything about it, because Saudi Arabia is America's trusted base in western Asia. Pakistan is its friend. The United States is forcing a decision made with its allies and its own laws on Russia and India; however, it is allowing countries like Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan to obtain missile technology because they are its friends and are under its control. It cannot do anything to China, which has nuclear bombs and missiles. More than these weapons, however, it has its self-determination, self-dependence, and pride. The American high-handedness depends on force. The United States cannot do anything to those countries that challenge it. By having our agreement with Russia canceled, the United States is giving us the message that we should stop depending on Russia and pay homage to the U.S. royal court. Should we follow the path taken by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia or the one taken by China? Or should we take our own path? We have no alternative. We must keep a stiff upper lip and gird our loins by launching our satellites and long-range missiles.

Similarly, we do not have to ask the United States to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. The United States considers only those countries that disagree with it to be terrorist nations. It learned about the Iraqi conspiracy to assassinate former President Bush in Kuwait and did not wait to target Baghdad with 23 missiles. India has provided thousands of proofs of Pakistan's open assistance to terrorists in Kashmir and Punjab; however, the United States of America does not want to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. At the same time, it is preaching to us about protecting human rights, while we are taking action against terrorists in Kashmir and Punjab. The United States gave Pakistan the right to spread terrorism in four Indian states, and also allows these terrorists to violate human rights in Kashmir and Punjab; however, the United States cannot give India the right to fight the terrorists who are waging a war of separatism and threatening India's unity. If we do not protect the human rights of these terrorists, then the United States will teach us a lesson.

Why should we expect a country like that to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation? We know what Pakistan is

doing in Kashmir and Punjab; therefore, we should declare it a terrorist nation and take whatever action is necessary. We should tell the United States clearly that we have to protect our unity and oneness, and that we do not have any desire to listen to its preaching. The United States has its own definition of terrorism. We should stay with our own definition. The United States will accept that only when we are determined to follow our own stand. We can say that we are unable to compare ourselves to the United States of America. How can we stand up against it? But then, in 1949, China was not even equal to India. Now it has not only managed to ignore the United States of America, but also its communist brother, the Soviet Union. It went on its own path and has now arrived at a place where no one can challenge it. We will be what we want to be, and are. The world will recognize us for what we are, if not today, then tomorrow. If Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh are forced to compromise and make various agreements, India will not. We have to twist the tail of the United States of America. We will lose our face in the whole world if we do what the so-called "Singhs" [Hindi for lions] wish. India must not lose its dignity.

#### **Paper Urges U.S. To Recognize Indian Space Prowess**

BK0708134793 *Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES*  
in Hindi 26 Jul 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Now INSAT-2B"]

[Text] India's latest satellite INSAT-2B is telling the story of our country's scientific skill and splendor which countries like the United States do not want to hear at all, but are forced to pay attention to. The United States has been able to seduce Russia in canceling the cryogenic engine deal with India (of course, in return its name was slandered the world over), but its gangsterism is yet to assume a novel position from where it can shoot down our newest satellite now eagerly waiting to be gracefully stationed in its slot 36,000 km away and 200 km above the earth. Even if the United States acquires such a power, it will not be possible for it to do this because the success achieved through INSAT-2B, which represents completion of the successive INSAT satellite series, is a big and significant news for the world. It is big and significant to the extent that the largest TV network of the United States, CNN, directly relayed the whole program of the launching of this satellite from French Guiana and narrated the virtues of the Indian space research program with liberal comments.

It was because of the fear of these successes that the United States cast its evil eye on the Russian deal on the supply of cryogenic engines. But how will it change the situation? If the engines are supplied, we will be able to launch a powerful satellite [Geo-Stationary Launch Vehicle] into the space within two years. And, if we do not get engines, this program will be delayed by two more years. This means that in spite of the United States

move to deprive us the Russian engines because of the fear of Indian commercial rivalry in the field of space by 1995, we will pose it the same challenge in 1997. India has acquired the capability of putting into orbit satellites, missiles and rockets to such an extent that it will soon be able to produce inter-continental missiles rendering the Missile Control Technology Regime—brainchild of the American lobbyists—an exercise in futility. As it will not be easy to prevent India from becoming a major power in missile and satellite technology, the United States, instead of lamenting, should happily view as to how this newest satellite of the Indian Space Research Organization (in fact, the 15th in series) will provide improved weather forecasting and subscribers trunk dialling facilities to the Indian people. It will also enable the Indian Doordarshan to operate five new TV channels. It is a matter of few more years when India will be able to sell such facilities to other needy countries in the open market.

#### **Internal Affairs**

#### **Bharatiya Janata National Executive Meets**

##### **Bhandary on Opening Session**

93AS1013A *Bangalore DECCAN HERALD* in English  
17 Jun 93 pp 1, 9

[Article: "BJP for Identifying Creamy Layer"; boldface and italicized words as published]

[Text]

#### **National Executive Meet Begins**

Bangalore, June 16—The two-day National Executive meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] began here today with members suggesting that the Centre be asked to identify and determine the creamy layer, following the recent Supreme Court judgment.

Briefing newsmen about the session this afternoon, Mr Sunderji Bhandary, BJP Vice President, said that the members were for evolving a general political consensus to counter the "vicious propaganda" that under the garb of creamy layer reservations for Backward Classes would be annulled.

Clarifying the BJP stand on the matter, Mr Bhandary said that the party stood for reservations for the Backward Classes, but preferred that the advantages of reservation be given to the lower rungs of the classes first. If such a consensus was arrived at, there would be no scope for misunderstanding or agitation on a point where there already seemed to be a national consensus, he said.

However, there was no change in the party's stand on Scheduled Castes and Tribes, Mr Bhandary said, adding that they were supporting the Constitutional position on that category.

**Failed:** In his opening remarks, Dr Murali Manohar Joshi, who is presiding over the meet, said that the Central Government had failed on all fronts. Referring to the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, he said that the State continued to "bleed and burn" at the instigation of Pakistan, while the administration continued to remain insensitive.

Dr Joshi said the administration was being pressurised to negotiate with the terrorists, and feared that if it was allowed to happen, terrorist activities would escalate all over the country.

Quoting the reported statement by the Speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly that he would like India to break into "nice little states," Dr Joshi demanded that Pakistan be declared a terrorist state. There was concrete evidence of Pakistani instigation not only in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, but also in the recent blasts in Bombay, he added.

Dr Joshi also expressed concern over the "rise in Islamic fundamentalism." Referring to the murder of BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] MLA [Member of Legislative Assembly] in Maharashtra recently, he regretted that the Government remained a "mute spectator" to activities like the "Milli Conference" which was held in Delhi recently.

**Concerned:** The outgoing President also touched upon the infiltration of refugees from Bangladesh and the Bahri Tribunal which declared the ban on the RSS and the Bajrang Dal untenable. Despite the declaration, the organisations had not been allowed to carry on with their normal activities, Dr Joshi said, adding that last Sunday in Kerala when the *Rashtra Chetana Day* was being celebrated, there was lathicharge and several thousand arrests.

This, he said, was a matter of concern for it was a threat to the normal democratic functioning in the country and a restriction on the fundamental rights of the people.

Dr Joshi also flayed the Government for not having acted in the right direction following the Jabalpur High Court judgment for the restoration of the BJP Governments that were dismissed after December 6.

**Reject Dunkel Draft:** Touching upon the economic situation in the country, Dr Joshi noted that it was on the verge of a debt trap and suggested that lessons be learnt from the Chinese economy. He also demanded that the Dunkel proposals in the agricultural and related sectors be rejected totally.

Though no resolutions were passed in the morning's session, members were asked to suggest issues that need to be incorporated in the resolutions that had already been drafted. That was when the matter of the creamy layer came up, Mr Bhandary said.

The meeting is likely to pass resolutions on the political situation, agricultural situation, with special reference to the Dunkel proposal, Kashmir issue and also decide on a social charter for the party.

Earlier, the meeting paid homage to Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa, senior journalist S. Moolgaonkar, BJP MLA Prem Kumar Sharma and several other BJP workers.

### Joshi Briefs Press

93AS1013B Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
18 Jun 93 p 4

[Article: "BJP Overturns Stand on Harshad"; boldface words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] Bangalore, June 17. The allegations against the Prime Minister made by "stock scamster Harshad Mehta"—as a two-page resolution of the Bharatiya Janata Party's [BJP] national executive adopted here today described the Big Bull—have touched off a wider debate within the party which has completely overturned its earlier stand that the star accused in the case be given "full protection" and be allowed to turn "approver."

The BJP's new strategy is to steer clear from the possibility of the party being seen as shielding Mr Harshad Mehta. The BJP today reiterated its demand for the Prime Minister's resignation but also said that Mr Mehta "must face all the legal consequences of his acts" and that it was "an undisputed fact that he has violated several laws." The outgoing president of the BJP, Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, told correspondents here that "the BJP unequivocally demands that all involved in the scam must be punished."

**Four 'B's:** At the same time, the resolution argued that "a bribe-giver may be a dishonourable man, but that does not dilute the guilt of the bribe-taker." Dr Joshi talked about breaking the nexus of the four 'B's, the bankers, the brokers, the bureaucrats and the buccaneer politicians. If the Prime Minister had been fair and transparent, he should have come up with the information about his meeting Mr Mehta, he said.

Dr Joshi said "the needle of suspicion is not only pointing at the Prime Minister, but is fixing on him." He must go. And when the veteran leader, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, was asked for his comment, he too said "the Prime Minister should go." Mr Vajpayee also emphasised that the BJP had for long been demanding radical reforms in the election system to enable the Government to finance political parties and their candidates as well as allow open donations to political parties "by cheque." He said the political developments were taking place rapidly and it was too early to say what the BJP's strategy would be when Parliament meets again for the monsoon session.

**Right ammunition:** The allegations made against the Prime Minister in Bombay yesterday have given the party just the right ammunition to launch a frontal



attack on Mr Narasimha Rao. The special resolution on the Mehta allegations recalls the various scandals linked to the Prime Minister—his son's involvement with the Goldstar scandal, his "unsuccessful attempts at sabotaging the Bofors probe in Switzerland" courtesy Mr Madhavsinh Solanki, the St Kitts forgery case and the alleged attempt to bypass the land ceiling legislation.

The resolution said the Mehta allegation had "shaken the national conscience" and Mr Rao has "caused damage to the institution and office of the Prime Minister." It also pointed out that the "national perceptions did not readily accept the Prime Minister's laboured denials." The cutting edge is added by emphasising that neither the Congress spokesman nor the Prime Minister had indicated their willingness to face an independent inquiry.

**Funds for BJP:** Reports of discussions inside the executive suggest that broadly there were two lobbies—one taking a directly political line and wanting the party to train its guns on the Prime Minister and the Congress(I) alone while the other led by Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr Arun Jaitley cautioning the party against seeming to shield the "stock scamster." In fact, the discussions seemed to have been rather frank, with one member expressing the view that even the BJP, after all, accepts donations from all kinds of businessmen and industrialists who could later be found to be involved in scandals.

To a pointed question addressed to Dr Joshi about the funds the BJP had received from "money-bags," he admitted that the BJP, like all political parties, accepted "donations," but added that "it was different when someone gives money with no strings attached. We are not in power, it is different from someone giving money to a Prime Minister."

The net result of all this was the resolution which focuses its attack on the Prime Minister without sparing the Big Bull.

**Hectic day:** It was a hectic day at the national executive. The committee had adopted a resolution on Kashmir late last evening, basically reiterating its known views, and today the discussion centred around the Mehta revelations and the political resolution which is to be given a final shape by the National Council session under Mr L. K. Advani's presidentship starting tomorrow. The resolution on agriculture with criticisms of the Dunkel proposals was also discussed and adopted.

There was also a discussion on the resolution on environment and ecology. Here, all the former Chief Ministers raised objections and wanted it amended to include an emphasis on development. So "eco-friendly development" is to be the party's catch-phrase. The former Chief Ministers and many other party leaders made it clear that they were opposed to "holding development to ransom" in the name of environment. From the Gujarat contingent there was strong opposition to the Medha Patkar campaign on Narmada.

**Direct, political attack:** The party's political resolution in fact gets well with the Mehta revelations for it is a critique of the Rao Government's two years. The attack is direct and political, and the BJP leaders are not hiding the fact that they would gain political mileage from the allegations. "But what can we do when the ruling party itself is embarked on a course of self-destruction?" was the comment of a senior BJP leader.

Late last evening there was also a reported meeting between the top leaders of the party—Mr Advani, Mr Vajpayee and Dr Joshi—and the RSS general secretary, Mr H. V. Seshadri, who also met the executive members over lunch yesterday. The Mehta political bombshell was reportedly the subject of discussion.

The party is yet to decide its course of action. One immediate possibility is an MPs delegation to the President Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, asking for the removal of the Prime Minister and fresh elections. The other view is that the BJP should first wait to see what the Congress itself does.

In view of these developments, Mr Advani may change his plans and fly straight to Delhi after the National Council ends on Sunday instead of going to Madras and embarking on yet another "rail-yatra" to the capital from there. But no firm decision has yet been taken.

## Papers Report on Rajiv Assassination Trial

### Arrests of Accused Questioned

93AS1006A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 17 Jun 93 p 3

[Article: "Defence Questions TADA Arrests"]

[Text] Madras, Jun 16 (PTI). The provisions of the TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities] Act were not applicable to the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, nor did the CBI have the statutory authority to investigate the case, defence counsel told the designated court here today.

Arguing on petitions seeking the discharge of Nalini and eight other key accused before the presiding judge, Mr S. M. Siddick, the counsel, Mr S. Doraisamy, said the charge-sheet had no material to show that the intent of the accused was to "overawe" the government to justify invocation of the TADA Act.

He said the main ingredient for defining a terrorist act was that there should be intent to overawe the government, to strike terror among the people, to alienate sections of the people or adversely affect harmony between different groups.

The assassination of Mr Rajiv Gandhi was the murder of an ordinary citizen who enjoyed no special status at the time of the killing, he argued, adding, the TADA Act, therefore, could not be invoked merely because he was a former prime minister.



Disregarding objections from the prosecution that the applicability of the TADA Act provisions to this case had been upheld by the Madras high court in two writ petitions filed by the same lawyer in 1991, Mr Doraisamy contended that even according to the prosecution, the murder was the outcome of personal rivalry between Mr Rajiv Gandhi and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader, Mr Prabhakaran.

Mr Doraisamy cited a 1990 supreme court verdict holding that the TADA Act would not apply to a killing due to individual rivalry, but the special public prosecutor, Mr P. Rajamanickam, read out from the madras high court judgment to the effect that the reasoning of the 1990 verdict was not relevant to the Rajiv Gandhi case.

Today's hearing was delayed by over an hour as the defence lawyers arrived late. Seven accused, including Murugan, were not present during the trial, which will resume tomorrow at the high-security Poonamallee prison-cum-court complex.

Earlier, Mr Doraisamy began his submissions by questioning the CBI's jurisdiction to investigate the case on the ground that there was no gazette notification authorising the agency to probe offences under the TADA Act. Moreover, the state government's consent for its operations in the state was not obtained.

(The Madras high court also held in its October 1991 order that the CBI did have the power to investigate this case, as the necessary notifications had been issued by both the Central and state governments).

The nine accused whose discharge petitions are being argued are Nalini, Padma, Athirai, Bhagyanathan, Dhanasekaran, Rangan, Kanagasabapathy, Perarivalan and Irumborai.

The accused who were absent today were Murugan, Ravi, Mahesh, Vijayan, Santhan, Jayakumar and Athirai. A conspicuous absentee was Nalini's baby girl, Srinii, who had accompanied her mother to all earlier hearings.

#### Defense Continues 22 June

93AS1006B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
23 Jun 93 p 7

[Article: "Conspiracy Charge Disputed"]

[Text] Madras, June 22 (PTI). Padma and Bhagyanathan, mother and brother of Nalini, the prime accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, who were accused of aiding, abetting and harbouring Sivarasan and Murugan, had no role to play in the killing, nor did they have any prior knowledge of it, the defence counsel told the designated court here today.

Resuming his arguments for the discharge of several of the 26 accused before the presiding judge, Mr S. M. Siddick, at the high-security prison-cum-court at suburban Poonamallee, the counsel, Mr S. Doraisamy, said

neither the prosecution's charge that Padma had concealed an LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] code-sheet given to her by Murugan, nor Bhagyanathan's letter to an LTTE leader promising all help for achieving "Tamil Eelam," proved their involvement in the case.

Dwelling at length on Bhagyanathan's alleged letter to an LTTE top functionary, Baby Subramaniam, stating that he would do whatever possible to achieve Tamil Eelam, he said Subramaniam was not an accused in the case, the sentiments expressed by Bhagyanathan were in consonance with the general solidarity shown by the people of Tamil Nadu to the LTTE's larger goal of Eelam.

To substantiate his argument, he cited the mass donation of a day's salary by Tamil Nadu government employees for the cause of Eelam in 1985.

The counsel also argued as not tenable the prosecution's charge that Bhagyanathan had arranged a taxi for Sivarasan, Subha, Murugan and Nalini to visit Tirupati after the assassination. "Going to Tirupati is not an offence nor is it in pursuance of the conspiracy," he said.

Referring to charges that Padma, a nurse in a city nursing home before her arrest, had concealed an LTTE wireless code-sheet with her colleague, he said it was not proved that the code-sheet had any connection with the assassination.

The counsel said the TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities] Act, on its own, had not defined what constituted the charge of harbouring an accused. Even if one went by the definition provided by section 52 (A) of the IPC [Indian Penal Code], it stipulated that only those persons who helped wanted persons to evade arrest could attract that section. The charge-sheet had not established that Padma and Bhagyanathan had sheltered Sivarasan after the conspiracy, he said.

Stating that Padma, a "poor lady, except being mother of Bhagyanathan and Nalini, has not committed any crime," the counsel said unless the accusation that she had a hand in the conspiracy was established, no charges could be framed against her.

The defence counsel also wanted the court to discharge the freelance photographer and accused in the case, Subha Sundaram, on the ground that his only interest in the case was to collect the photographs of the assassination taken by his friend, Hari Babu, for publication. The photographs later provided vital leads to the SIT [expansion not given].

He said Sundaram was an accredited photographer who was taken by the Indian government to Jaffna for covering the LTTE's handing over of captured IPKF [Indian Peace Keeping Forces] soldiers. Being a press photographer, he shared a professional relationship with the LTTE and there was no evidence to suggest that he had any knowledge of the conspiracy, he said.

Mr Doraisamy also wanted the court to discharge Irumburai, another Indian Tamil charged with carrying messages to LTTE leaders and harbouring Sivarasan and Subha, on the grounds that the charge-sheet did not mention his association with the alleged conspirators before the assassination.

For Dhanasekharan, a lorry fleet owner who was charged with helping Sivarasan and Subha to flee from Madras to Bangalore in a tanker lorry to evade arrest, the counsel said transporting the accused could not be construed as harbouring under the TADA Act.

#### More on Defense, Prosecution

93AS1006C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 24 Jun 93 p 4

[Article: "SIT Probe Not Over: Defence Counsel"]

[Text] Madras, June 23 (UNI). The investigation by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Central Bureau of Investigation [CBI] into the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case has not come to an end as it had not probed the alleged involvement of some Congress leaders in the assassination, the defence counsel told the designated court today.

Resuming his arguments on the discharge petitions of several accused at the high security Poonamallee sub jail, the defence counsel, Mr S. Doraiswamy, who dwelt on the "deeds and misdeeds of the prosecution" said that the statements recorded from the witnesses and evidences collected by the prosecution would reveal something more than what was submitted before the court.

The filing of the charge-sheet before the court was not the end of the investigation, he argued.

Mr Doraiswamy wondered why the SIT had not probed the appearance of Congress posters about the assassination at Arakonam within two hours of the gruesome killing.

Mr Doraiswamy also raised a question as to how the investigating agency omitted the statement of a secret witness that his wife had come to know of Mr Gandhi's visit to Sriperumbudur even before his programme was finalised and published in the press on May 19 and had obtained permission from the Congress leader, Mr Maragatham Chandrasekhar, to enable her daughter Kokila to recite a Hindi poem to the former Prime Minister.

He said the charge-sheet filed by the SIT had too many loopholes and contradicted some of the statements given by the witnesses in the case.

It was not easy for Mr Doraiswamy when he presented his case as he was frequently interrupted by the prosecution counsel, Mr P. Rajamanickam, who at one point demanded a ruling by the court on the question of allowing the defence counsel to "deal with the deeds and misdeeds of the prosecution." "In what way is the

argument on this head relevant for the discharge petitions," he asked. He sought to know whether the topic could be brought under Section 227 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Mr Rajamanickam said the court was concerned only with the recorded and materials placed before it and the defence counsel could not be allowed to level baseless charges.

Objecting to this, Mr Doraiswamy said it was open for the prosecution to deny his charges but it could not shut his mouth before he made his submissions. "I am relying on the materials placed before the court and may be permitted to prove that those materials were immaterial for the case," he added.

However, when he said that the investigation had not come to an end, Mr Rajamanickam was again on his feet to say that rightly or wrongly the investigation had been completed and the court had accepted the charge-sheet, what was submitted before the court by the prosecution was the final report and the court had come to the stage of framing charges against the accused, he said and argued that it was not open for the defence counsel to say that the investigation had not come to an end.

When Mr Doraiswamy touched upon the appointment of the Jain commission to probe the conspiracy behind the assassination, Mr Rajamanickam again intervened and said it was totally irrelevant and hence the counsel could not be allowed to waste the time of the court. The defence counsel was indulging in mudslinging against the prosecution just because newsmen from the two news agencies were present, he charged.

Mr Doraiswamy however, continued his argument and said relying on the statement of the witness, the witness's wife and Ms Maragatham Chandrasekhar were aware of Rajiv's arrival to Sriperumbudur even before his programme was announced at Delhi by the All India Congress Committee on May 18. "Something had happened before May 19 and that was missing," he claimed.

He cited a statement of another secret witness to disprove the prosecution case that Sivarasan and Subha were shifted from Madras to Bangalore in a tanker.

According to the witness's statement, Sivarasan and company left Madras and went to different places before they came together at Indira Nagar in Bangalore. This not only did support the prosecution case but also contradicted it, he said.

Citing a statement of a female witness he said she had gone to the venue of the meeting twice once at 6.30 p.m. and again at 8.30 p.m. According to her during her second visit she had seen a woman with garlands along with two men whom one was wearing spectacles. The one in spectacles was obviously Sivarasan. Who was the other man who accompanied him? Mr Doraiswamy asked.

Citing the same statement, Mr Doraiswamy said the witness had identified two girls (Subha and Nalini) seen sitting at the extreme left of a photograph of audience at the meeting venue and told the investigating agency that she had seen them along with Congress leaders Dr Rama Devi, Ms Lakshmi Albert, Ms Sundarambal and Ms Santhakumari and her sister Saroja Devi giving their names to Mr Jothi, TNCC (Tamil Nadu Congress Committee) joint secretary.

This statement falsifies the case of the prosecution that Nalini alongwith the alleged assassin Dhanu, Sudha, Sivarasan and photographer Haribabu had come in a bus from Madras, he said.

He charged that the prosecution had successfully prevented Athirai, an accused in the case from rescinding her confession statement when she wanted to reveal the names of some important Congress leaders allegedly involved in Rajiv's assassination.

He said only to fill up the lacunae and loopholes, the SIT had created two imaginary persons—Pottu Amman and Akila and implicated the LTTE supremo, V. Prabhakaran, in the conspiracy theory.

He also said Sivarasan who was stated to be a prime accused by the prosecution could not be described as terrorist as defined under Section 3 (I) of the TADA Act.

### Harshad Mehta Makes Statements on Scam Case

#### Text of Affidavit

93AS1014A Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
17 Jun 93 p 4

[Article: "Text of the Affidavit by Harshad"]

[Text] Bombay, June 16. The following is the text of the affidavit released by Mr Harshad Mehta at a press conference in Bombay today.

I, Harshad S. Mehta, Indian inhabitant of Bombay, aged 39 years and resident at 92B Madhuri, Dr Annie Beasant Road, Worli, Bombay 400 018 do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under:

1. It is public knowledge that I, First Information Reports (hereinafter referred to as "FIR's") have been filed against me by the "Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). It is also public knowledge that apart from the CBI other investigating agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax Department have also initiated investigations into the business activities of myself, my family members and various companies under my control.

2. During my interrogation by the CBI, I have at least on two occasions been queried about withdrawals of large funds from my Bombay and Delhi bank accounts. Statements of which the CBI had in its possession at the time of the interrogation. The queries pertain to the reasons as

to why these huge cash withdrawals were made and how the cash so withdrawn was disbursed.

3. On 9th February, 1993 I was once again queried by the CBI in Bombay in connection with these cash withdrawals. In particular the CBI interrogated me in connection with cash withdrawals amounting to Rs 85,00,000 from my bank accounts. This sum of Rs 85,00,000 was withdrawn on two dates viz 2nd November, 1991 and 4th November, 1991 from my Bank Accounts in Bombay and New Delhi respectively. The break up of this amount of Rs 85,00,000 is reproduced hereinbelow.

Name of the Bank: A.N.Z Grindlays Bank, M.G. Rd, Fort, Bombay. Date: 3-11-1991, Amount (Rupees) 10,00,000.

State Bank of India, Main Branch, Bombay, Date: 2-11-1991, Amount (Rupees) 30,00,000.

A.N.Z Grindlays Bank, Parliament Street, New Delhi, Date: 4-11-1991, Amount (Rupees) 25,00,000.

A.N.Z. Grindlays Bank, Parliament Street, New Delhi, Date: 4-11-1991, Amount (Rupees) 20,00,000, Total (Rupees) 85,00,000.

4. The reason for the said cash withdrawals as also the disbursement of the same matters which are politically sensitive in the extreme as is elaborated hereinafter. It is for this reason that in my cash ledger accounts of Bombay and New Delhi there is no narration against the above mentioned 4 amounts and the narration column against these accounts was deliberately left blank. The Income Tax Department has seized the computer data containing these Cash Ledger Accounts in its raid that was conducted on my group on 28th February 1992. The Data pertaining to these Cash Ledger Accounts are also in the possession of CBI and it is obvious that because there is no narration about the above mentioned withdrawals that I have been interrogated about the same.

5. On 17th February, 1993 I addressed a letter through my Advocate Mr Mahesh Jethmalani to the Director, CBI, Mr Samit K. Datta which was delivered to him on 18th February, 1993 in New Delhi. In this letter my Advocate has informed the Director that I have on at least two occasions been interrogated by the CBI about the said cash withdrawals. Mr Jethmalani has further informed the said Director that the reasons for the said cash withdrawals as well as the disbursement of the amounts are politically sensitive in the extreme. My Advocate has sought an assurance from the said Director of CBI of complete protection from political harassment and persecution in the event that I make a statement to the CBI of the true facts regarding the above mentioned cash withdrawals. Till date no reply has been forthcoming from the said Director of CBI.

6. On 18th February, 1993 I was required to appear before the Income Tax Authorities in Bombay under a summons. I duly attended the Income Tax office and I



was interrogated by the Income Tax Authorities on that day. During the course of this interrogation the Income Tax Department for the first time queried me *inter alia*, about two of the above mentioned withdrawals amounting to Rs 45,00,000/—withdrawn on 4th November 1991 at New Delhi. I informed the Income Tax Authorities that the answer to the query about the said 2 withdrawals was very sensitive in nature and that in connection with the same my Advocate had addressed a letter to the CBI, the previous day and a reply to the same was being awaited by me. I assured the Income Tax Authorities who were interrogating me that I would reply to their query after I received a reply from the CBI. In view of the fact that I may be required to set out the truth of these cash withdrawals at any time before either for both the above mentioned interrogating authorities, I have been advised to make an Affidavit setting out the mode and manner of disbursement of the cash amounts mentioned above.

7. I have known one Mr Sunil Mittal since 1989. Mr Sunil Mittal resides in New Delhi and is one of the Directors of M/s Bharati Telecom Limited. I and my family members are one of the largest share holders in M/s Bharati Telecom Limited. Mr Sunil Mittal's father was one Satpal Mittal, who died in January 1992. Through my connection with Sunil Mittal I developed a close association with his father Mr Satpal Mittal, who was a Parliamentarian of long standing. At the time of his death he was a member of the Rajya Sabha representing the State of Haryana. Mr Satpal Mittal wielded considerable influence in the corridors of power in New Delhi.

8. Mr Sunil & Mr Satpal Mittal were considerably impressed with our activities in the financial markets, the stock market in particular. As friends they had always emphasised the importance of political clout to achieve economic prosperity in this country. We had established some contacts through me that Mr Satpal Mittal had extremely cordial relations with the Prime Minister Mr Narasimha Rao. He had met him and apprised him about who we were and how we could be of help to him. Apparently the Prime Minister was quite impressed and interested enough to meet me personally. The Mittals told me that the Prime Minister's election to the Parliament was due shortly on 16th November, 1991 and that this election presented a good opportunity for organising a meeting with him. He further suggested that it would be an opportune moment in particular to present the Prime Minister with a blueprint reflecting our ideas as to how the capital market could play a vital role in ushering speedy economic growth. He also suggested that we could make a donation to the Prime Minister for his forthcoming election to the Parliament and thereby establish enduring friendship with continuous access to the Prime Minister. I was extremely enthused by the suggestion and told Mr Satpal Mittal that he could fix up an appointment with the Prime Minister as soon as possible. Mr Satpal Mittal told me

that he would speak to the Prime Minister and fix a convenient date as well ascertain from him financial needs for the election.

9. On 1st November, 1991, Mr Sunil Mittal contacted me in Bombay and informed me that a meeting had been arranged with the Prime Minister by his father for 4th November, 1991 at 10-45 in the morning. Mr Sunil Mittal also told me that his father had been asked to secure a contribution of Rs 1 crore for the Prime Minister's forthcoming election. I told Sunil Mittal that it would be extremely difficult to raise Rs 1 crore in cash at such short notice. Mr Sunil Mittal said that as the meeting was already arranged we should not allow the opportunity to slip by and I should anyhow arrange the money. I realised the importance of the meeting and so I told Mr Sunil Mittal that the meeting should take place as scheduled and I will do everything I can to organise the money well in time.

10. After I spoke to Mr Sunil Mittal I immediately contacted Mr Mohan Khandelwal who was president of my company, Growmore, in New Delhi. I told him that Rs 1 crore was needed by me in cash and be made available to me on Monday morning at the very latest. Mr Mohan Khandelwal told me that it would be extremely difficult to arrange the said sum but he would let me know the position by Saturday morning.

11. On the next date i.e. on the 2nd November, 1991, Saturday morning, he contacted me and told me that it was impossible to raise a sum of Rs 1 crore by Monday morning. The only way that it could be done according to him was by making cash withdrawals from my bank accounts from New Delhi and that in turn would only be possible if there was a clear balance in my accounts, which according to him there was not. The only way therefore, by which I could deliver the money to Mr Narasimha Rao on the scheduled date was by withdrawing monies from my bank accounts in Bombay and carrying it physically to New Delhi.

#### Paucity of Rs 500 Notes

12. The most convenient way that I could physically carry the monies to Delhi was to obtain currency notes in Rs 500 denominations. I accordingly despatched my first cousin Hiten Mehta and an assistant looking after Bank matters to State Bank of India Main Branch, who carried 8 cheques for Rs 80,00,000 and another a blank cheque duly signed by me. They were informed by the State Bank of India Main Branch that the Bank did not have Rs 500 currency notes at all and possessed Rs 100 and Rs 50 notes and that too only to the tune of Rs 30,00,000. If I required a withdrawal of more than Rs 55,00,000 the Bank could only provide Rs 20 and Rs 10 currency notes. I sent my other representatives Mr Pankaj Shah who is my Assistant Vice-president and Vijay Palande, an assistant looking after Bank matters to A.N.Z. Grindlays Bank, M.G. Road Branch with a duly signed cheque for Rs 10,00,000. However, the said Bank informed Mr Pankaj Shah that they neither possessed Rs 500 notes



nor Rs 100 currency notes. Ultimately I withdrew a sum of Rs 30,00,000 from the State Bank of India Main Branch which was handed over to my representatives and Rs 10,00,000 from A.N.Z. Grindlays Bank, M.G. Road Branch which was handed over to my representatives in denomination of Rs 50.

#### 55 Lakhs From Bombay

13. Apart from the Rs 40,00,000 handed over to us by the 2 banks aforesaid we also had a cash balance of little over Rs 15,00,000. This amount we decided to carry to New Delhi along with Rs 40,00,000 which we had withdrawn from the bank. Thus the total amount which we decided to take to New Delhi was Rs 55,00,000.

14. On Sunday 3rd November 1991, I along with my brother Ashwin Mehta who was to join me, Satpal and Sunil Mittal a the meeting with the Prime Minister, travelled to New Delhi. The money which was to be delivered the following day was carried by us in 2 suitcases which were checked in by us. We arrived in New Delhi from where after collecting our luggage including 2 bags containing currency notes of Rs 55,00,000. We drove straight to Holiday Inn Hotel where we arrived at around mid-night. We were informed on our arrival at New Delhi by Mr Khandelwal that he had only managed to raise a sum of Rs 12,00,000 in New Delhi.

#### Arrival in Delhi

15. The next morning I spoke to Sunil Mittal on telephone and told that we had only managed to raise Rs 67,00,000 so far. We told him that the balance could be arranged within 24 hours. Mr Sunil Mittal told us not to worry since his father would manage the deficit with the Prime Minister. Mr Sunil Mittal also told me that it was imperative that we arrive for the appointment with the Prime Minister exactly on time. It was also decided between Sunil Mittal and me that me and my brother Ashwin were to leave Holiday Inn along with suitcase containing the money and we would meet the Mittal near Prime Minister's house where we would get out of the car, remove the suitcase from our car, put it in Mittal's car and then 4 of us along with the suitcase would travel together to keep our appointment at the Residence of the Prime Minister at Race Course Road.

16. Prior to our departure in the morning Mr Mohan Khandelwal arrived with a suitcase containing Rs 12,00,000. The total sum of Rs 67,00,000 was placed in a large suitcase which we had obtained for the purpose of carrying all the money to the Prime Minister's residence. The suitcase was then locked.

17. Myself and Ashwin travelled in our car from the hotel which was driven by the company chauffeur to the scheduled meeting place between the Mittal and ourselves. Mr Mohan Khandelwal did not accompany us because we entrusted him with the work of raising the balance monies which was to be delivered to the Prime Minister.

18. At the appointed meeting place we found the Mittals waiting in two cars i.e. Contessa and Honda Accord for us. With the assistance of the driver the suitcase containing the money was removed from our car and put in the Mittals' Honda Car.

19. Myself and Ashwin got into the Honda Car along with the Mittals and a driver and proceeded to the Race Course Road. The Contessa car followed us with Mr Manmohan who was the P.A. of Mr Satpal Mittal.

20. Before entering the Prime Minister's Bungalow we went through security checks on 2 occasions. We were cleared almost immediately thanks to the efforts of Mr Manmohan and the obvious proximity of Mr Satpal Mittal with the Prime Minister. When we reached the Prime Minister's Bungalow we were straightaway escorted to the room of Mr Khandekar, Personal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr Satpal Mittal was.....profusely by Mr Khandekar. We had carried our suitcase containing Rs 67,00,000 which we deposited in a corner of Mr Khandekar's room. From Mr Khandekar's office we were taken by Mr Khandekar within 5 minutes to the drawing room of the Prime Minister, which was situated adjacent to Mr Khandekar's office. Within minutes the Prime Minister emerged in the said drawing room. Immediately on the arrival of the Prime Minister, Mr Satpal Mittal introduced me and Ashwin to the Prime Minister as 'Two Bright Stars of Bombay.' The Prime Minister said that he had already heard about us. Thereafter as per our prior discussion in the car while driving to the Prime Minister's residence that Ashwin should articulate the nature of our organisation and our objectives to the Prime Minister. Ashwin handed over a profile of M/s. Growmore and outlined to the Prime Minister for about 3 minutes about our group activities. Thereafter Ashwin unfolded the main agenda by outlining in brief to the Prime Minister the untapped potential of the capital market as an engine for fuelling economic growth. Ashwin also outlined to the Prime Minister our theory of the efficacy of debt and credit swap which consisted of substituting Government Debt with the bank by shares of Public sector units held by the Government, thereby eradicating at one stroke the massive interest burden of the Government. The Prime Minister was extremely taken up with this idea and himself sought a meeting in future in which he promised that he and the Finance Minister would be present. The Prime Minister appreciated our role and contribution in the growth of the economy and he blessed us. He further pledged his total support, and asked us to fall back upon him in the event of any difficulty faced by us. He also told us that his doors were always open to us. By this time, Mr Satpal Mittal had asked for the bag containing Rs 67,00,000 to be brought in and told the Prime Minister that for the time being only Rs 67,00,000 was arranged which was meant for the Prime Minister's election and that the balance of Rs 33,00,000 would be paid within a day. The suitcase was brought in and Mr Satpal Mittal pointed out to the Prime Minister that the

money was contained in the suitcase. The Prime Minister said that the same should be retained with Mr Khandekar.

#### Keys Forgotten

21. In the afternoon while we were at Mr Satpal Mittal's residence Mr Manmohan informed that Mr Khandekar had approached him with a message that the keys to the suitcase had not been deposited with him. He immediately realised that in an excitement in meeting the Prime Minister we had forgotten to hand over the keys of the suitcase to Mr Manmohan who subsequently delivered it to Mr Khandekar.

22. On the same day, Mr Mohan Khandelwal withdrew at different times a sum of Rs 25,00,000 and a sum of Rs 20,00,000 from my account in A.N.Z. Grindlays Bank, Parliament Street Branch. Out of this sum, Rs 12,00,000 was adjusted against the amount which he had delivered to us at the Holiday Inn Hotel and the balance of Rs 33,00,000 was delivered by him to Mr Sunil Mittal according to the instructions of Mr Khandekar.

23. I say that I am making this Affidavit voluntarily of my own free will for the purpose of setting the record straight in respect of the Cash withdrawals about which my explanation has been sought by the CBI and the income Tax Authorities. I further stated that I have stated hereinabove is to the best of my knowledge.

Solemnly affirmed at Bombay this 24th day of February 1993.

#### Excerpts From Statement to Press

93AS1014B Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
17 Jun 93 p 4

[Article: "Economic Mismanagement, Cause of Scam: Harshad"]

[Text] Bombay, June 16. The following are the excerpts from Mr Harshad Mehta's statement at a press conference here.

"I am grateful to the members of the press and news media assembled here today, to hear a version of truth which has been totally submerged and obliterated out of view by a torrent of malicious and mendacious propaganda unleashed against me now for more than a year. Out of this one year, I have remained in police custody for more than three and half months (111 days)."

"While I was in custody, and thereafter, I have been painted as the author of a scam; as a person who has misappropriated national wealth to the extent of Rs 5,000 crores and the big bull who has badly damaged the country's economy. In the climate of passion and prejudice created against me, I had no hope of successfully putting across my version. I patiently bore the calumny heaped upon me, but early this year, I decided to clear myself before the people and tell them who the real culprits are. It was in this context that I instructed my

lawyer, Mr. Mahesh Jethmalani, to write to the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] a letter dated 17 February, 1993 offering to explain some bank withdrawals and cash disbursements of the first week of November 1991 around which revolves the true story of the genesis of this scam."

"The primary cause of the scam is the prolonged economic mismanagement of the country and its banking system.

"At the same time, the Government suddenly and drastically revised interest rates on Government securities and PSU bonds inflicting a loss of about Rs 17,000 crores on existing holders of these assets.

"It is in this background that the banks decided to make money by any means and ignored the practices and guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India. This is not a novel disclosure that I am making for the first time. Fortunately, the same conclusion has been reached by the final report of the Janakiraman Committee submitted in April this year. In particular, I draw attention to paragraphs 5 and 6 on page 11 and 12 of the said report.

"If the relevant parts of the report are carefully scrutinised, it should be manifest to anyone that it is not the brokers who went to the banks but the banks who went to the brokers and I just happened to be one of the prominent ones. In their desperate search for profitability, to mitigate or wipe out their earlier insolvency, they flouted every regulation which may have been binding on them.

"It is well known that while almost all the banks were in the red, the stock market was booming. The BSE [Bombay Stock Exchange] index on January 25, 1991 stood at 956 and around the time this Government assumed charge in July 1991 it stood at a level of 1400. By December of 1991 it had climbed to a level of 1800. On the day of the Budget, i.e. on February 28, it stood at around 2800."

The Budget triggered a wild run thereafter and just in a span of only 30 days it gyrated to a level of upwards of 4500 level. On more than one occasion the Government took credit of the market conditions in and outside Parliament that the rise of the market was on account of its economic policies. It is here that my story of the cash withdrawals of November 1991 becomes relevant. Without going into details, on November 4, 1991, I met Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao at about 10-45 in the morning, in the company of my brother Ashwin and a Congress Rajya Sabha member, late Satpal Mittal, at the Race Course Road residence of the Prime Minister.

"Apart from the three of us, Mr Satpal's son, Mr Sunil Mittal, was also present at the meeting. We had brought to the Prime Minister's residence, a suitcase containing cash amount of Rs 67 lakhs. This suitcase was brought into the Prime Minister's house and handed over to the Prime Minister himself who

instructed that it should be retained in charge of his personal assistant, Mr Khandekar."

The amount was paid at the instance of the said Mr Satpal Mittal, who had earlier settled the amount with the Prime Minister. The amount settled was in fact one crore but by the morning of November 4, we had only been able to procure Rs 67 lakhs and the remaining Rs 33 lakhs was paid on the next day, after arrangements were made on the same day. The mechanics of the stock markets were explained to the Prime Minister. Its future potential was clearly brought out. The details of these payments, withdrawals, and our journey to the Prime Minister's residence and the payment to the Prime Minister are all mentioned in an affidavit, which I swore as early as February 24, 1993. The affidavit was duly notarised. I am circulating that affidavit alongwith this statement. There is no statement in this affidavit which I cannot substantiate, if the persons concerned have the courage to deny the truth of any one of them.

A significant part of the story of payment is the forgotten key of the suitcase, which Mr Khandekar called for from Mr Satpal Mittal's residence and which was subsequently delivered to Mr Khandekar by Mr Manmohan, personal assistant to Mr Satpal.

"Prior to the 24th of February, 1993, I instructed my advocate to address a letter to the CBI on 17th February, 1993 seeking protection from political harassment if they wished me to reply to their queries pertaining to the withdrawals of Rs 85 lakhs in November, 1991.

The CBI by its letter dated 25/2/93 expressed its inability to do so. The CBI which acts under the supervision of the PMO [Prime Minister's Office], either chose to ignore my lawyers letter dated 17th February, 1993 or was instructed to ignore it. It is significant that my offer, on receiving proper immunity, was not even communicated to the Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC]. It is only when the Joint Parliamentary Committee came to know from its own source, that we had written such a letter to the CBI, that the committee compelled the CBI to produce our letter.

Significantly, I have never been interrogated by the CBI on this matter since my letter. Of course, they wrote that they were not in a position to grant me immunity.

When the JPC questioned the CBI about their inaction in the matter, they seem to have provided false explanations, including the one that the letter had been written by my lawyer without my authority and instructions.

I asked my brother to issue a contradiction the very next day. The conduct of the CBI, which is virtually an agency of the Prime Minister, in this case, wholly corroborates my story that the CBI did not formally want to know the truth."

"I am painted as the author of Rs 5,000-crore scam. This allegation is repeated even today by Congressmen and spokesmen of the Government to deny me the immunity

that I have asked for. The truth of the matter is that 12 FIRs [First Information Report] have been filed against me. Investigation of not even one has been completed. Not a single charge-sheet has been filed against me. Even if all the FIRs are taken at their face value, the total claim is less than Rs 1,500 crores.

I am able to establish by their own figures that this amount should be at least Rs 400 crores less. However, the Government has taken charge of our assets which are worth more than Rs 1,500 crores. Apart from this, some 23 accounts belonging to my family members, who are not even accused in any of the FIRs have been attached and frozen. Some of these assets have suffered a substantial erosion of value due to mishandling.

The custodian has, to the best of my knowledge, already initiated recovery of claims. As of today, the Government is holding approximately Rs 400 crores of our assets in excess of the claims which they have made against me. Curiously, the custodian has not been responding to my queries on certain assets.

"I wish to recall, that long before I was arrested, I addressed a letter on 17th May, 1992 to Shri Madhavan of the CBI, in which I not only offered him complete cooperation in investigations but invited him to take charge of assets and wipe out my liabilities. By their foolish and arbitrary behaviour, they brought down the value of assets by at least Rs 1,000 crores, thus causing irreparable damage to innocent members of my family.

I have conveyed a similar offer to the Janakiraman Committee but the committee only replied that securing repayment of the liabilities was not the Committee's function. I have made my offers to all the concerned banks and the Finance Minister.

### Reportage on Reaction to Harshad Mehta Statements

#### Congress Working Committee

93AS1015A Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
18 Jun 93 p 4

[Article: "Text of CWC Resolution"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 17. The following is the text of the resolution adopted by the Congress Working Committee [CWC] at its meeting here today.

The Congress Committee expresses its disgust and revulsion at the disgraceful attempt by the prime suspect in the biggest financial swindle of all times to hurl baseless and malicious allegations against Prime Minister of India. It is regrettable that some leaders of Opposition parties, instead of seeing through the obvious design behind this slander, have tended to lend credence to it. Behind this obnoxious game of hurling false accusations against the Prime Minister lies the cynical calculation of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] that this gambit would



enable them to disrupt the Indian polity and throw the political process in disarray, so that the BJP can derive undue political advantage therefrom.

The Prime Minister has already categorically denied the malicious aspersions made against him. This should bring the whole sordid episode to a close. Any credence lent to the slanders of an alleged swindler, would only create a dangerous and despicable precedent and the Indian polity would become, for all times, vulnerable to blackmailers, criminals and swindlers of all sorts. That will indeed be a sad day for the country and the political process.

The people have witnessed during the last three decades how rumours and innuendoes were repeatedly used to achieve dubious political objectives which could not be gained by normal and legitimate political processes. In the Seventies, the people saw this dubious game in which similar baseless allegations were levelled against the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. The ghost of Bofors was projected in exactly the same manner in the late Eighties when allegations were hurled against the late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, however, not a shred of evidence was advanced to substantiate the canard against Rajiv Gandhi.

Once again a similar sinister game seems to be on. Since there was countrywide condemnation of the BJP and its communal allies following the Ayodhya incident, and the party was totally isolated, the BJP is desperately wanting to get back political respectability. In order to subserve this dubious political objective and deflect the people and political opinion from the powerful course of anti-communalism, the BJP is trying to revive anti-Congressism by raising, once again, the bogey of corruption in high places. Those who have nothing positive to offer to the people are trying to derive political advantage by hurling baseless and malicious allegations. Those who have swindled thousands of crores and cheated lakhs of small investors seem to be acting in concert with those who want to politically cheat and mislead the people of India. The Congress Working Committee strongly condemns this political chicanery.

The CWC is confident that the people of India would see through this dirty game and would support the Government in its bid to punish those responsible for the security scam, condemn those who are asking for the condoning of misdeeds of the person who perpetrated the biggest fraud on the Indian public and will refuse to be beguiled by those who are attempting to malign a leader who has served the country for over five decades, since the days of freedom struggle, with dedication, simplicity and integrity. The Congress working committee unanimously reaffirms unflinching support to the Prime Minister and Congress president and stands unitedly behind him.

The Congress Working Committee calls upon all party workers to work among the people to combat the devious designs of the forces of destabilisation through character assassination.

### Mittal, Political Parties

93AS1015B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 19 Jun 93 p 1

[Article: "Mittal Denies Pay-Off to PM"]

[Text]

### Strategy To Rebuild Image

New Delhi, June 18. The businessman, Mr Sunil Mittal, today denied having received or sent any money to the Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, on behalf of the stockbroker, Mr Harshad Mehta, even as the joint parliamentary committee (JPC) asked for clarifications from the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] and Mr Mehta on the alleged pay-offs to highly placed politicians, agencies report.

Mr Mittal said in a statement in New York that Mr Mehta's claim that his late father, Mr Satpal Mittal, MP, was instrumental in the deal was "preposterous" and he did not remember having ever met the Prime Minister in the company of Mr Mehta.

He described as "scandalous" the suggestion in some news reports that he had left the country to avoid being contacted.

"I would like to state that my overseas trip was planned weeks in advance with appointments fixed in London and four places in the United States. Even the flight out of India was booked a month before my departure," he asserted.

To suggest that his overseas trip as a "deliberate attempt" to stay away from India is "just to tarnish my name," Mr Mittal said, adding that he would return to India at the earliest.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leaders, including Mr Sharad Pawar, Mr Chimanbhai Patel and Mr Arjun Singh, met here to evolve a strategy to refurbish the image of the Prime Minister in view of the pay-off charges, before the meeting of the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) presidents and Congress legislature party (CLP) leaders began at the Prime Minister's house.

The JPC is sitting on Monday to discuss some members' demand to summon the Prime Minister and Mr Mehta before the committee.

The Janata Party president, Dr Subramanyan Swamy, has demanded reconstitution of the JPC in view of allegations of pay-offs to some members.

A meeting of National Front-Left Front parties coordination committee, scheduled to be held today, to discuss the pay-off charge against the Prime Minister, has been postponed to tomorrow.

The CPM leader, Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet, said any decision on "this sensitive national issue" will not be taken in a hurry.



He said JPC should summon the Prime Minister and all others allegedly involved in the securities scam.

He said the Congress would not be able to survive under the leadership of Mr Rao. The party's stock was declining every day due to various scandals and economic bungling, he said.

Mr Surjeet deplored the Prime Minister's attitude to Mr Mehta's allegation and said he was vet to make his position clear.

The Prime Minister today asked Congressmen not to get demoralised or distracted by wild accusations and petty things which the party had to face often.

Addressing a large delegation of Congress workers of Delhi, which congregated at his residence to express solidarity with him, Mr Rao said the Congress had withstood many a storm in its 108-year history.

The one it was facing now would also pass, he said and asked them not to give up their patience and faith in their work culture.

He described as "false and fabricated" the allegation that he had received Rs 1 crore from Mr Mehta.

The chief ministers of Maharashtra and Gujarat, Mr Sharad Pawar and Mr Chimanbhai Patel met Mr Arjun Singh, in an effort to finalise a strategy to resurrect the image of the Prime Minister and arrest damage to the Congress.

The three leaders conferred before the meeting of the PCC presidents and CLP leaders began at the Prime Minister's house.

The Congress is likely to come forward with a "positive plan of action" to meet the situation arising out of the charges made by the Bombay broker.

PCC presidents and CLP leaders, meanwhile, have extended support to Mr Rao's leadership.

The general body of the Congress party in Parliament is holding an emergency meeting tomorrow to take stock of the situation.

Mr Yashwant Sinha, a member of the JPC said the Prime Minister should either subject himself to an independent inquiry, or offer to appear before the JPC or, in the alternative, suggest another mode of inquiry.

He said Mr Rao should step down as Prime Minister till the inquiry was completed and the ruling party should elect an interim leader for a period of three to four months.

### Government Spokesman

93AS1015C Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE  
in English 20 Jun 93 pp 1, 9

[Article: "Government Denies PV's Meeting With Harshad on November 4"; boldface words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, June 19 (PTI): The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, had no meeting with Harshad Mehta on November 4, 1991, as he had an official engagement at his South Block office at the time of the meeting mentioned by the Bombay stockbroker in his affidavit.

Describing Mr Mehta's claim of meeting the Prime Minister at his 7, Race Course Road residence at 10.45 am on November 4 as "totally false and mischievous," the spokesman said right from 9.00 am to 1.15 pm on that day, Mr Rao had a series of official meetings and was away from his residence till mid-day.

Giving full details of the Prime Minister's engagements on that day, the spokesman said Mr Rao had left the Rashtrapati Bhavan at 9 am for a breakfast meeting with the President. After this, the Prime Minister had driven down to this South Block office to preside over a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) at 10 am.

The spokesman said Mr Rao had received a large delegation of intellectuals and academics from Pakistan led by the former Foreign Minister, Mr Aga Shahi, at 10.45 am, the time alleged by the Bombay stockbroker when he allegedly met the Prime Minister.

"After this the Prime Minister had a series of meetings and appointments at South Block and as usual practice he had left for his residence at 1.15 pm for lunch," he said. The spokesman said the stock broker's "affidavit gave a very imaginative description of the meeting with the Prime Minister. It goes on to say that the Prime Minister emerged into the drawing room and the person describing it obviously does not know that no visitor is allowed into this room when the Prime Minister is not present."

The spokesman said all visitors to the Prime Ministers house including members of Parliament, and all articles were subjected to strict checking by the security staff. Entry was allowed to the PM's house after the arrival of concerned visitors and the appointments were confirmed. They were given entry passes only after the appointments were confirmed, the spokesman said.

Records were also maintained by the staff about all visitors for a fortnight. This practice had been maintained for a decade, the spokesman said.

As to whether the Bombay stock broker had met the Prime Minister any other time, the spokesman said the government was ascertaining the facts before replying to this.

He set at rest speculations in the media over the government's silence for the past three days on the crucial question of whether the Prime Minister had met the prime accused in the securities scam.

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr V. C. Shukla, who briefed media persons about the deliberations at the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting earlier in the day, said the members expressed solidarity with the Prime Minister and party president, Mr Narasimha Rao, in his fight against forces of destabilisation.

Answering a volley of questions, Mr Shukla denied that the entire 100-minute meeting was a stage-managed show, with only 'convenient' members being allowed to speak. Everyone who desired to speak was given a chance and only a few members could not speak due to paucity of time. Every speaker was allowed to have his full say, with no one pressing the bell to signal the member of conclude, he said.

Asked specifically about Mr Rama Chandra Rath, he said there was some disturbance from among the members while Mr Rath spoke. He, however, did not think the member said anything objectionable, Mr Shukla said.

The minister also brushed aside suggestions of intra-party conspiracies as evidenced by the parleys between the Human Resource Development Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, and the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr Sharad Pawar. Leaders met and discussed matters when the Congress Working Committee (CWC) was in session. It was a normal thing and no particular significance could be attached to it. Another pointer to Mr Arjun Singh's stand on the issue was the categorical support he extended to the party president. There were no differences in the party about the approach to facing the current tirade against the party. There were no rumblings in the party, he stated.

Asked about the inordinate delay on the part of the party and government in confirming or denying the charges made by Harshad Mehta, Mr Shukla said the Prime Minister had categorically denied receiving any money from Mehta. "How come Mr Rao remembered this aspect even as he seemed to have no recollection of whether he met the Big Bull or not," asked one reporter. "He could give a positive reply on the first count because he never received money from anybody. He is unable to give a categorical reply to the other part because he meets hundreds of people every day, and it is difficult for anyone to remember whom he met on a particular day," Mr Shukla replied. That was the reason why the records were being gone through meticulously so that a categorical reply could be provided on this score, he said.

"Who collects money for the Prime Minister?" asked another cheeky reporter. "No one. No one collects money on behalf of the Prime Minister. Funds are collected on behalf of the party by the treasurer. It is the treasurer who spends the money also," said Mr Shukla.

"Will you file a defamation case against Mehta for levelling such allegations?" "No. This is a political onslaught against the party. We will meet the challenge at this level only."

"Will the Prime Minister appear before the JPC if summoned?" "Actually, even if the meeting did take place, as alleged, the timing of the meeting (November, 1991) was much before the scam broke. So I do not think it would be a matter coming under the purview of the JPC. However, if the JPC wants to take cognisance of the meeting, the Congress will cooperate."

"Do you think the party's image has suffered on account of this issue?" "Yes. This kind of campaign does damage the party image."

"What do you propose to do about it?" "Everybody is enormously concerned about the conspiracy against the party. We are aware that it can hurt our political image and economic achievements. The campaign is absolutely anti-national."

So went the question-answer session with Mr Shukla denying any proposal just now for the Prime Minister to take the nation into confidence about the issues involved. People already know the discrepancies in Harshad Mehta's statements.

The party was evolving its political strategy to counter the campaign, he said.

#### 'Holes' in Testimony

93AS1015D Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE  
in English 18 Jun 93 p 1

[Article by S. Viswam: "Harshad Exposed"; quotation marks as published]

[Text]

#### Master of Fraud Fails To Succeed

New Delhi, June 17: Confirming the DECCAN CHRONICLE report that stockmarket swindler Harshad Mehta's alleged payment of Rs 1 crore to the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, was a blackmail, experts have found holes in the pay-off suitcase.

What must have been the size and weight of the suitcase which Big Bull Harshad Mehta says he carried into 7, Race Course road, and gave to the Prime Minister? The answer could be an eye-opener regarding the plausibility or otherwise of the scamster's story.

One bundle of Rs 100 notes weights about 100 gm. One bundle of soiled or used notes weighs 125 to 150 gm. A sum of Rs 67 lakh was allegedly delivered. If they were all new notes and if the bundles were of Rs 100 denomination, there would be 670 bundles (ten bundles making Rs 1 lakh), at 100 gm each, weighing 67,000 gm or 67 kg.

But he said they were all used notes and of Rs 50 denomination. Even if we assume that the bundles were

half of Rs 100 and half of Rs 50 denominations of used notes, the weight would be more than 100 kg. Did Harshad Mehta go through two security checks carrying a load of more than 100 kg excluding the weight of the suitcase? And was the boot of the car large enough to accommodate the suitcase which in order to carry 100 kg fully packed ought to have been outsize?

Now, about the size of the suitcase. The volume occupied by a bundle of Rs 100 notes would be 6.5 inches x 3 inches x 0.5 inches equally 9.75 cubic inches. The dimension of the largest suitcase is 30 inches x 20 inches x eight inches, equalling 4,800 cubic inches. How many bundles can the suitcase accommodate? 4,800 divided by 9.75 equals 492 (bundles).

If all the notes were of Rs 100 denomination, even then it would not fit because there would be 670 bundles. But, according to Mehta, there were bundles of Rs 50 denomination also. Is it credible that all the money was in one suitcase when even half the bundles would not fit in the largest one? Has the master of fraud and fabrications fabricated another story of fraud?

### Public Opinion Poll

93AS1015E Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE  
in English 18 Jun 93 p 1

[Article by Abhay Ekbote: "66 Percent Want PV To Stay"; boldface words as published]

[Text]

### Opinion Poll Rejects Harshad's Charges as False

**Hyderabad, June 17: Big Bull Harshad Mehta is lying. He has not paid any money to the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao. And Mr Rao surely need not resign. And let Mr Rao face a probe—not so much because he is under a shadow but because the truth has to be established.**

These were the opinions of a majority of the people in the twin cities, as reflected in a quick survey conducted by Management & Marketing Research Consultants, Hyderabad, a day after the stock broker alleged in Bombay on Wednesday that he had paid Mr Rao, Rs 1 crore on November 4, 1991.

Despite a tight deadline, the survey team quizzed 150 respondents. To cover as wide a range of opinions as possible, the survey group was divided to different groups such as professionals (lawyers, doctors, chartered accountants etc), academics, government employees, media personnel and industrialists.

The respondents, selected from each group at random, were reached by telephone due to shortage of time. They were asked questions from a structured questionnaire (which provides for 'yes,' 'no,' and 'don't know' answers) and the responses tabulated and analysed.

The findings are as clear as they are self-explanatory. The response across the board was strongly in favour of the Prime Minister and against the stock broker. The importance of this strong division of opinion is that not only do most of the respondents belong to the powerful middle and upper-middle classes, they also are directly affected by change in government and governmental policy.

Presented here are most important results of the survey.

As many as 66 per cent of the respondents reposed faith in the Prime Minister and said he should not resign. While 22 per cent said he should quit, a high 12 per cent were undecided.

And why do they say Mr Rao needn't resign? Because as many as 55 per cent of the respondents believe that Harshad Mehta has not given Mr Rao the money in the first place. Just over a fourth of the respondents believed that the Big Bull did indeed give him the money, but a high 18 per cent were non-committal.

And now the crux question: Do the respondents believe Harshad Mehta? As much as 57 per cent of the respondents thought he was lying and just about half that number, 29 per cent, thought otherwise. A whopping 14 per cent did not want to comment.

Given the fact that a majority believed that Mr Rao did not take any money, that Harshad Mehta is lying and that Mr Rao needn't resign, was there any need for an inquiry? Of course, said the respondents, all 60 per cent of them. But the inquiry should be instituted not because they suspect the Prime Minister but because the truth should be out. Just about half that number said an inquiry was not needed.

And what about the status of the Prime Minister during the inquiry? Should he be replaced for the duration of the trial? A whopping 72 per cent reposed confidence in Mr Rao and said there was no need for him to step down, even if temporarily. Less than a third felt that Mr Rao should give way for other leaders for the period of the inquiry.

Just about one in four respondents, 25 per cent, believed Harshad Mehta and his revelation of the pay-off and that Mr Rao had taken the money. Therefore, they felt, Mr Rao should resign and face trial.

But they were in a clear minority. 75 per cent of the respondents simply backed the Prime Minister. And should there be an inquiry—a huge 65 per cent supporting the idea—it should be to establish the truth.

Whatever be the claim of rival political parties, the survey shows that they haven't allowed their thoughts to be rushed. And that the scamster's latest fraud has not really worked.



### HINDU Analyst

93AS1015F Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
21 Jun 93 p 8

[Article by K. K. Katyal: "Toughest Challenge for PM"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Today is the second anniversary of the assumption of office by the Narasimha Rao Government. Normally, it would have been an occasion for jubilation in the Congress(I) camp, projected as an achievement by the Prime Minister personally. Had he not belied the prophets of doom and stayed in power, even though the ruling party remained in minority and the country turned increasingly ungovernable? But, precisely at this moment, Mr Rao faces a serious challenge, the toughest posed to any Prime Minister in independent India. His integrity and credibility is sought to be eroded through an amazingly direct charge, a frontal attack. It makes the outlook for the future uncertain. With a dark shadow cast on the Prime Minister, the Congress(I) clearly, is in no mood to celebrate. It is engaged in a grim defensive fight—the outcome of which will be crucial. The anniversary has turned sour.

The immensity and the various dimensions of the damage done by the 'sordid episode,' to use the words of the Congress(I) Working Committee, needs to be understood clearly, for an objective assessment of the working of the system, the parliamentary democracy and all that goes with it. What it means to the Congress(I) immediately and in the long term is equally important.

### Daunting

To take the second issue, the Congress(I) was in no good shape even before the prime accused in a mega scam, Harshad Mehta, struck at its Prime Minister. The nature of challenges, both internal and external, required to be tackled by him, was daunting, howsoever viewed. The state of the economy made the country vulnerable to pressures, now being stepped up because of the perceived weakness of the Government. There was a marked contrast between the magnitude of the tasks and the capability of the rulers. The Mehta move is certain to make things worse. It denigrates the office of Prime Minister, as never before. Serious charges were, no doubt, levelled against Mr Rao's predecessors, but the peddlers of pay-offs were never alleged to have gained access to the head of government.

Why does the word of the prime accused in a case of gigantic swindling get the same, if not greater, credence than that of the Prime Minister? The reason lies in the steady devaluation of politicians, of all hues, because of which the public is prepared to believe the worst about them. Their credibility, never very high, is at an all-time low now. Have not we heard all manner of stories about the alleged involvement of ministers in shady deals, of their no-holds-barred bids to amass money while the

going is good. The charges may be untrue, partially or wholly, but what does one do about the deep-rooted public perceptions?

Things have not come to such a sorry pass in a day. The system has been under siege for years. A member of Parliament or a State Legislature begins his career with patent dishonesty—solemnly affirming that he or she kept the election expenses within the statutory ceiling while, in fact, the amount spent is many times more. To cover the default, he or she creates fictions—that the excess amount was spent by the party, friends, well-wishers and supporters. The nature of the superstructure resting on this foundation could well be imagined.

### Reality

The reality is in sharp contrast with the fiction—the excess amount, at times of staggering dimensions, is supplied by those possessing unaccounted money, 'earned' with the help of political patrons. The nexus between the politician and the crook and the dishonest is inherent in the electoral system.

The Congress(I)—as also other parties, whenever in power—have not felt any qualms in fostering a culture which gives a weightage to the smart among the crooks. The members of this tribe are models of perseverance and persistence—they put in systematic efforts to gain access to the wielders of power, and work their way up through monetary inducements. The kith of the politician in power get their special attention and the dividends are handsome. Some of the business empires that mushroomed in the last two or three decades are the products of this phenomenon as already mentioned in news columns. This is not a value judgment on the issues involved in the present case, but merely an explanation for the crisis of credibility of politicians.

### 'Sordid Episode'

For the Congress(I), the 'sordid episode' could not have come at a more inopportune occasion. The party faced a grim struggle for survival though, in the immediate context, it managed the problem of numbers to get over its handicap as a minority force. This was done not by any accretion to its strength but by dividing and splitting the opposition groups and enlisting the support of break-away factions. What it meant to the system, because of the hefty blows administered to it, is another story. The outlook of the Congress(I) is far from bright. Apart from the aftermath of the Ayodhya demolition, communal riots, Bombay I and Bombay II, it had to reckon with the serious discomfiture caused to it by the judicial verdicts—its decision to ban the RSS and another member of the Sangh Parivar was knocked out by the judicial tribunal, while the Madhya Pradesh High Court ordered the restoration of the State Assembly, dissolved at the instance of the Congress(I)-ruled Centre.

There is no escape from fresh elections by the end of the year in the four states where the BJP Governments were dismissed but there was nothing to suggest—even before

the scamster's attack to the Prime Minister—that the Congress(I) had moved towards recovery of the lost ground. In the biggest of the four states, Uttar Pradesh, it continues to be gripped by paralysis, caused by deep factionalism and demoralisation. In Madhya Pradesh, a modest beginning was made to project a united face, with a rally, addressed by various leaders, normally associated with warring factions. In Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, there is neither an improvement nor a setback. What happens to the party's stock after the latest development is obvious.

### Heavy Stakes

The stakes for the Congress(I) in the coming elections are fairly heavy. What is involved is not the question of power in the four States but a lot more. This poll is certain to be regarded as a curtain-raiser for the next Lok Sabha election (whenever it is held) and, as such, will set the tone for the bigger fight. Any loss of face could have a ripple effect.

The Congress(I)'s response to the challenge of Harshad Mehta—and the forces behind him—has been far from adequate. Apparently, the party rallied behind the Prime Minister in the hour of difficulty. Has not the Working Committee, the Council of Ministers, PCC(I) presidents and legislature party leaders and the Parliamentary Party affirmed faith in his stewardship in unambiguous terms? But that is not the whole story. The discordant note, struck by Mr R. C. Rath, a former Youth Congress(I) leader, at the meeting of the party MPs may have been a lone case, but the sympathy and support, evoked by it cannot be ignored. Even if Mr Rath had not spoken the way he did, there is plenty of evidence of the rumblings in the party, the show of unity notwithstanding. An average Congress(I) member, especially an MP or a State legislator, is a down-to-earth realist when it comes to calculations about his prospects. For him, the main question is: "Will Mr Rao ensure his victory in the next election?" The latest episode cannot have provided a reassuring reply. His inner feelings, thus, can be imagined.

### Survival Instinct

Why then this demonstration of unity and support? The explanation is not difficult. It is the collective instinct for survival that is at work now. Any damnation of the leader, it is clear to them, will be deemed to be a damnation of the party as a whole, which they cannot afford. Once this threat has been tackled, the stage for serious introspection may be reached. If by then, the charge, levelled by Harshad Mehta, is effectively countered, it will be one type of situation, if not, it will be another.

The Congress(I) has sought to project the scamster's statement as a conspiracy. Behind it is seen the hand of the BJP as also of a Bombay-based industrial house—which sought to strike a deal with the Congress(I). It wanted, so goes the version, certain concessions and

favours in turn for ensuring the silence of Mehta. For the BJP, the Mehta charge was God-send and it made full political use of it, as evidenced by their Bangalore conclave. But in doing so, the party ran into a predicament—it became aware of the danger of identifying itself too closely with the prime accused.

### Dangerous Trend

The scam, till now confined to the world of banking, securities, share brokers, has now got inextricably mixed with political manoeuvres. It is a dangerous trend. The country's politics is already dirty; an additional dose of murkiness will make it worse. There was another danger—the attention will be diverted from the misdeemeanour and misconduct of the unscrupulous that led to the loot of thousands of crores of rupees. Not very happy thoughts on the second anniversary.

### Bharatiya Janata National Council Meets

#### Advani Speech Reported

93AS1012A Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English  
19 Jun 93 pp 1, 9

[Article: "BJP Proud To Incur (Congress(I)'s Wrath Over Payoff Row: Advani"; quotation marks, italicized and boldface words as published]

[Text] Bangalore, June 18—Mr L. K. Advani, who formally took over as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President here today, said the BJP was "proud to plead guilty" of incurring the Congress(I)'s wrath in the Harshad Mehta pay-offs case since it amounted to a public acknowledgment to his party's crusade against corruption.

In his presidential address at the inaugural session of the 14th national council meet of the BJP here, Mr Advani said the Congress Working Committee's [CWC] resolution on Thursday did not rebut even a single allegation made against Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao by the controversial Bombay stock broker.

Instead, the resolution was a vitriolic outburst against the BJP and a significant pointer to the transformation in the political scenario. "If today, the focus of the ruling party's wrath is the BJP, it is public acknowledgment that the Government regards BJP as the principal crusader against corruption," he claimed.

He said corruption charges levelled against former prime ministers Indira Gandhi (1974-75) and Rajiv Gandhi (1988-89) had invited Congress ire against Mr Jayaprakash Narain and Mr V. P. Singh respectively, but ultimately the leaders were proved right. Now, his party occupied centre stage in the fight against corruption and was sure to win.

The crux of the pay-off scandal was not the amount that had exchanged hands, but the reasons for the pacification. Mr Rao was fully aware of the reasons and it should come out into the open, Mr Advani demanded.

**Hysteria:** Referring to the anti-BJP hysteria, particularly after the December 6 demolition of the Babri masjid at Ayodhya, he said the BJP had deliberately distanced itself from the "vote bank pseudosecularism" now in vogue. National unity could not be enhanced by having double standards, one for the major and another for the minority; in other words, by promoting minorityism, he stressed.

Mr Advani alleged that the politics of minorityism had not only undermined national unity, but also hurt the interests of the minorities themselves. He urged Muslims to ponder over this harsh reality and emancipate themselves from the clutches of vote bank brokers, both Hindu and Muslim. He also urged the community not to see the BJP through the tinted glasses of its adversaries, but to judge it by its track record of guaranteeing security, justice and equality to all sections alike.

Denying that the BJP had "created" the Hindutva concept, Mr Advani said the party had only rekindled a national spirit in a system in which pseudo-secularists wanted the country to disown its own personality.

**Allegations:** He charged the Congress with wanton, encouragement to corruption and opportunism, sapping the moral vitality of society and bringing the country into disrepute. "It has elevated manipulation into a governing principle of public life," Mr Advani alleged.

It was little wonder then, the BJP president said, that the Congress was out to introduce a legislation to outlaw religion from politics. Stating that the problem with today's politics is not that there is too much religion, but that there is too little Dharma, he said restoring the balance is the core of the BJP concept of 'Rama Rajya': a just, moral and strong State.

Mr Advani called for a legislation to outlaw dishonour to the national flag, curb indiscriminate *fatwas* and misuse of the pulpit for anti-national propaganda.

**Political Gimmick:** Attacking the "licence-permit-quota Raj," inflicted on the country by the Nehru-Mahalanobis model Mr Advani said for the Congress party, economic policies have been a matter of political expediency.

The nationalisation mania of the '70s had no logic. Similarly, the present ardour for privatisation was also an expediency, he suspected.

Mr Advani also touched on "ethnic cleansing" by Pakistani agents in Kashmir, Indo-Pak and Indo-Sino relations, and the nuclear policy. "The objective of the BJP is the happiness of the people. Political power is only an instrument to achieve this goal. We, however, do not wish to be the people's choice by default. Therefore, our task is three-fold—to widen the support base, to draw up a sound policy framework for governance and to instill

confidence in the people that this truly is a party with a difference," Mr Advani added.

Outgoing President Murali Manohar Joshi attacked the Congress' attempts to convert corruption into a virtue and traced the BJPs consistent efforts to stem this trend.

**Shock Waves:** Welcoming the gathering, BJP former State President B. S. Yediyurappa hoped the three-day session would generate enough heat to send shock waves to the "corrupt Congress" and all over the country.

Stating that the BJP had become the "people's party" in Karnataka, he said in the 1989 Lok Sabha polls, the party had won four seats. The Yelahanka by-poll was only a slip between the cup and the lip and the party had lost by a mere 512 votes.

**Dunkel Flayed:** The session later adopted resolutions urging the Government to reject the Dunkel draft proposals, pertaining to the agriculture sector.

The resolution which also urged the Government to take a series of steps for development of agriculture, held that the Dunkel proposals were part of an international bid to stifle the growth of Indian agriculture.

The resolution further urged the Centre to supply fertilisers, pesticides, quality seeds, water, power and agricultural implements to farmers of concessional rates besides appealing for scrapping sales tax on all farm inputs.

Speedy implementation of the land reforms, remunerative prices for farm products, introduction of a pension scheme for agricultural labourers, removal of restriction on movement of foodgrains, encouragement to drip irrigation, and delicensing of sugar industry were among the other major steps which the resolution urged the Government to take up in the overall interest of the Indian farmers and consumers.

#### Political Resolution Adopted

93AS1012B Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA in English 20 Jan 93 pp 1, 26

[Article: "Dissolve House: BJP"]

[Text] Bangalore, June 19. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had earlier demanded the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, following Mr Harshad Mehta's allegations, today sought to step up its political battle by pressing for dissolution of Parliament and ordering of midterm elections as both Mr Rao and his government had "forfeited the mandate to rule the country."

In its political resolution, moved by the former Rajasthan chief minister, Mr Bairon Singh Shekhawat, and adopted by the 14th national council session of the party, the BJP gave enough indications that it was ready to accept the gauntlet thrown at it by the Congress party by blaming it for the scamster's charges against the Prime Minister.



Neither the Prime Minister nor his government "have a leg to stand on" following the latest revelations by Mr Mehta and Mr Rao's financial dealings with him, the resolution said while not bothering to press for its earlier demand for Mr Rao's resignation and an independent inquiry into the entire sordid affair. The political resolution was significantly silent on the stockbroker's crimes.

Castigating the Rao regime for its inaction during the last two years and total failure on nearly every front, it said the common man felt not only let down but betrayed and forced to wonder whether there was a government at the centre.

"It is one thing for any government to have tried and failed. But the Rao government has not tried at all and raised non-government to such a fine art, it is all but invisible.

Its first impulse is to deny everything from its involvement in the securities scam that has deprived innocent citizens of their priceless savings to the tune of Rs 10,000 crore to its dubious role in Ayodhya," the resolution said, attacking the Rao regime for allowing the nation to drift into disaster "on a much bigger scale than even under the previous ruling party governments."

In a scathing indictment on the 2-year rule of the Rao regime, the resolution said: "The Prime Minister and his cabinet are chaos personified. The nation's polity, economy, society, external relations are in chaos and over it all presides the scandalous figure of Mr Rao, whose own personal integrity has now been brought into question by a Bombay share broker in his shocking revelations that throw a lurid light on the nexus between the Prime Minister himself and his shady connections with the financial underworld of the country."

The Rao government may be a non-government but it is single-minded in its pursuit of filthy lucre, and in striking compromises with corruption, including corruption at the highest level, has shown its true colours in the recent impeachment proceedings (against Justice Ramaswamy) in parliament... The ruling party and its Prime Minister do not feel strongly about anything and are ready to compromise with anything and anybody just to survive and remain in power. So do its chief ministers, many of whom have been pulled up by one court or the other on several counts of culpable corruption," it said adding: "At no time in recent history have so many Congress chief ministers fallen foul of the law and been hauled up before the courts, it is a sad reflection on the rampant lawlessness that is the hallmark of the present Congress government under Mr Narasimha Rao."

The BJP leaders, Mr A. B. Vajpayee, challenged the Prime Minister, to file a defamation suit against Mr Mehta to prevent possible blackmail like President Nixon in the Watergate scandal.

Addressing a news conference here, Mr Vajpayee demanded that Mr Rao make public all his appointments and that of his secretariat staff and securitymen in November 1991. "There are doubts in the public mind that the records can be tampered," he said.

Expressing surprise that Mr Rao had not even denied that he ever met Mr Mehta, Mr Vajpayee said a denial would go a long way. "Personally, I would be happy if Mr Rao comes out of this ordeal untarnished," he said and added that delay in publicising the records would give the impression that there was an attempt to "recollect, rearrange and recreate" the events.

The entire episode, he said, reminded him of the Watergate scandal in which a small functionary came to blackmail President Nixon. "A Prime Minister of a great country could not place himself in the position of President Nixon," added.

Replying to a question, Mr Vajpayee said that his party would decide on demanding a probe into the episode only after examining the denial of Mr Rao. When a reporter pointed out that Mr Rao may be waiting for "an appropriate time," Mr Vajpayee asked: "to misappropriate."

Mr Vajpayee said that in the wake of these revelations, his party was in favour of electoral reforms being expedited. Even if other political parties did not agree, his party would unilaterally decide to accept donations only through cheques so that elections were not financed with black money. "We are considering this proposal seriously," he said.

### Report on Social Charter

93AS1012C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 21 Jun 93 pp 1, 13

[Article: "BJP To Launch Drive Against Corruption"; italicized words as published]

[Text]

### Social Charter Adopted

Bangalore, June 20. In an obvious bid to broaden its appeal and woo a wider section of people to its fold, the BJP today adopted a "social policy charter" which seeks to serve the dual purpose of combating the "vicious campaign of misinformation and disinformation" against it and reassuring the Dalits, backward classes, women and other weaker sections.

The charter, moved by Ms Sushma Swaraj, MP [Member of Parliament], and supported, among others, by Ms Uma Bharati, MP, and the Hindi cine star, Mr Shtrughan Sinha, which was adopted at the concluding day of the 14th BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] national council here, has reaffirmed that the party's approach is rooted in integral humanism.

"The BJP is wedded to the ideal of a socially-integrated society as the very basis for the sustenance of India as a modern, dynamic nation. All socially and economically weak and backward constituents of the society will be helped along through special welfare and other schemes to reach their potential for contribution to the society and accord them an honoured place in society," the charter said.

(The session concluded with a resolve to launch a "relentless three-month" campaign against corruption, reports PTI.

Announcing this at the close of the national session, the party president, Mr L. K. Advani, said the nationwide campaign would begin on June 26 and end on September 25.

He said the dates were significant as it was on June 26 that emergency was declared in the country in 1975 and September 25 was the birth anniversary of the party's founder leader, Deendayal Upadhyay.)

Countering the propaganda that *Manusmriti* would condition the governance of the country when the BJP comes to power, the charter asserted, "When BJP comes to power, it will be the constitution alone which will determine and guide the governance of the country."

"Neither *Manusmriti* nor Shariat and much the Bible and other holy books of different religions will be allowed to determine and guide the governance of the country, which will be based solely on the constitution. The very essence of the Indian way of life is change with the perception of the needs of changing times, and naturally the constitution will be amended as and when necessary," Ms Swaraj, the mover of the charter declared, making it repeatedly clear that the ideals, principles and goals of equity and equality as enshrined in the constitution would be adhered to.

Declaring that the BJP believed in a casteless, socio-economic order which would effectively provide access to equal opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of their caste, creed, region and gender, the charter vowed to eradicate the practices, customs, beliefs, usages and institutions which are divisive, discriminatory and in any manner demean the personality of the individual and dignity of the citizen.

It pledged to "fulfil and complete the unfinished agenda of social renaissance" to ensure that all people lived and worked in an atmosphere of social harmony as equal partners in the progress and prosperity of the country and condemned the practice of untouchability. "The pernicious practice of untouchability is nothing but religious perversion and is not only against the law but runs counter to the very concept of integral humanism," it said.

On reservation, the party reaffirmed its stand that the constitutional safeguards for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes should be made operationally more effective

and the institutions like commission for SC/STs as well as the commission for women should be made more effective and representative. While the existing reservation policy for SC/STs should be continued as it is, the quota in services should be filled up on time-bound programme.

Reiterating its support to the 27 per cent reservation for other backward classes (OBCs) recommended by the Mandal commission, the BJP wanted the benefits to flow in "ascending order from the bottom to ensure that the most backward of the backwards got the benefit of reservation first." As poverty was one of the main causes of backwardness, the BJP favoured 10 per cent reservation on the basis of economic criteria to all economically weaker sections other than SC/ST and the OBCs by amending the constitution if necessary.

It renewed its demand for evolving a common civil code as envisaged in the constitution by making a thorough study of all existing laws, traditions, rites and customs and thereby promote a sense of fellowship as well as common citizenship to reinforce the process of national integration.

The BJP wanted a human rights commission instead of a minorities commission, which only fed the sentiment of separatism apart from giving rise to imagined grievances. A properly constituted human rights commission would ensure for every citizen the fulfilment of the promise of a better quality of life. However, the party rejected all foreign interference in the internal affairs on the excuse of human rights.

On women and children, the BJP's social charter covered several problems affecting them and strongly condemned the heinous crimes like sati, dowry, child marriages, dowry-linked atrocities on women, infanticide and wanted the occupation avenues to women to be widened to enable them to become equal partners in the country's progress.

It wanted concerted action to uplift the condition of women through education, social movement and legislative measures to end gender-based or any other form of discrimination in any form in the name of scriptures, established traditions, social practices and personal laws.

Reiterating its faith in the principles of equity and equality enshrined in the constitution, the BJP policy statement said the party did not countenance the politics of minoritism and pledged fairplay and justice.

The BJP has also constituted two separate panels to have a second look at its constitution and suggest changes and another to chalk out a programme of action to observe its *Kashmir Bachao, Desh Bachao* campaign all over the country from July 6.

While the panel on the BJP constitution will comprise Mr Sunder Singh Bhandari, Mr Kushabhau, Thakre, Mr Ashwini Kumar, Mr V. Rama Rao and Mr Mishra, the campaign committee will consist of Mr Pramod

Mahajan, Mr Narendra Modi, Mr Kushabhau Thakre, Mr Madanlal Khurana and Mr Venkaiah Naidu.

The BJP chief, Mr L. K. Advani, who announced the formation of the panels at the concluding session of the national council said the campaign committee has been entrusted with the responsibility of organising country-wide programmes from July 6, the birth anniversary of Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherji, till September 25, the birth anniversary of the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, which will be observed to focus the party's struggle for preserving the country's unity and integrity.

### Advani Addresses Rally

93AS1012D Madras *THE HINDU* in English  
21 Jun 93 p 9

[Article: "BJP Not a One-Issue Party: Advani"]

[Text] Bangalore, June 20. The BJP president, Mr L. K. Advani, said here this evening that the growing popularity of his party was an affirmation of the people's growing faith in it.

Addressing a public meeting at the National High School Ground at Basavangudi here, Mr Advani said though the Ayodhya movement had contributed to the growth of the BJP, the party was by no means a one-issue party.

Though the National Executive and the National Council of the party which met here in the last five days discussed various subjects, including the Dunkel proposals and the plight of agriculturists, it was strange that some journalists and some political observers still harped on the theory that theirs was a one-issue party. If they had relied on the Ayodhya issue since the 1989 Palanpur (Gujarat) session, it was to rekindle Indian nationalism and make the nation dynamic.

Mr Advani made it clear that the BJP did not want to come to power at the Centre on a negative vote. Since 1977, all the Governments at the Centre had come to power on a negative vote. The Janata Party came to power in 1977 on an anti-Congress vote. Indira Gandhi returned to power on an anti-Janata vote. The BJP now wanted to come to power gaining the positive support of the people. It wanted to make society riot-free, the administration corruption-free, the economy debt-free and elections violence-free, he said.

**A shame:** Referring to the stock broker, Mr Harshad Mehta's charge against the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, Mr Advani said, it was a matter of shame that the people of the country believed an admitted culprit, not its Prime Minister. There could not be any more dramatic fall in the credibility of the Prime Minister. He recalled that the former Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr S. Bangarappa, had alleged in an interview to a Kannada weekly, *Vaarapatrike* that he had given money to those in power in Delhi.

The overcast sky and a drizzle gave anxious moments to the organisers of the public meeting. But the clouds cleared and the meeting went off without a hitch.

A youth who waved a black flag when the former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr Kalyan Singh, was speaking, demanding that he speak in Kannada, was belaboured by some one in the gathering. He was taken out of the ground by the BJP General Secretary, Mr Pramod Mahajan. Both Mr Advani and Dr Joshi spoke in Hindi interspersed with English. Mr Advani had his speech rendered into Kannada by the party. MLC, Mr D. H. Shankaramurthy, finding that a large number of those in the gathering were from rural areas.

Former Test Cricketer Mohinder Amarnath, who has joined the party, was on the dais. He was present at the meeting of the National Council also.

### PM Must Go: Joshi

"India will not tolerate a corrupt Prime Minister anymore. He should go lock, stock and barrel and get lost in the dustbin of history," said the BJP's outgoing president, Dr Murli Manohar Joshi.

The earlier Mr Narasimha Rao went it would be better for him and also the country, he said. Calling the former Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr S. Bangarappa, as "corrupt" and the Prime Minister "super corrupt," Dr Joshi said there was a 'dirty nexus' between the two. He alleged that Mr Bangarappa had collected money from various sources and handed over Rs 2 crores to Mr Narasimha Rao and also doled out funds to Mr Sitaram Kesri and others. The ironical part was that Mr Narasimha Rao had Mr Bangarappa removed from the post of Chief Minister on charges of corruption.

Criticising the Congress(I) Government in Karnataka for its policies, particularly on the economic front, Dr Joshi said India had surrendered its economic independence to international funding agencies. India was heading towards becoming the largest indebted country and it was shameful.

On the issue of dharma, Dr Joshi said it could not be separated from politics and that the BJP would stand for truth, justice and the values enunciated as dharma. The Congress was appeasing the Muslims, he said and mentioned how the coalition Government in Kerala had declared Friday as Government holiday instead of Sunday, in four districts.

Dr Joshi also attacked the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mr Jyoti Basu, for his statement (in an interview to *THE HINDU*) that West Bengal would become independent if the BJP came to power. "Mr Basu can go anywhere he wants. In fact, we will provide him a ticket."

The former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Mr Kalyan Singh, who was introduced as the "King of Ayodhya" in his address, said one more Kar Seva needed to be



performed and that was ousting the Congress(I) from power. "Once the Congress(I) is removed, then we can have a Rammandir as well as form a nation in which one culture, one country, one law exists."

The former president of the Andhra Pradesh unit of the BJP, Mr Venkaiah Naidu, said the Congress was an epitome of corruption and there were striking similarities between the Chief Ministers of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Chief Ministers of these States were being constantly changed.

The president of the State BJP, Mr K. S. Eswarappa, welcomed the huge gathering and also introduced Ms Lakshmi, film actress, Mr Shatrughan Sinha, Mr Dwarakesh, and Mr Chandru, popularly known as Mukyamantri Chandru to the crowd. All through the meeting, well known filmmaker, Mr G. V. Iyer, remained seated with the press corps, unnoticed by the BJP leaders.

#### **Rao Speaks in Response to Mehta Allegations**

93AS1016A Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 20 Jun 93 pp 1, 16

[Article: "Harshad-BJP Link Clear, Says Rao"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 19. The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, today alleged a clear nexus had been established between the BJP and Mr Harshad Mehta in the current campaign against him and vowed to fight both, report PTI & UNI.

Addressing an emergency meeting of the Congress party in Parliament, he said the attack on him was part of a "methodology, adopted by forces which had used religion as a political tool."

A resolution unanimously adopted by the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) decried what it called "diabolical game plan" to slander the head of the government who has pursued the investigation of the scam with determination.

Expressing full faith and confidence in the leadership of Mr Rao, the resolution said that the scam was not merely considered as an act of financial swindle but a grave crime against the people. The Prime Minister, it noted, had not hesitated in booking even influential and highly-placed individuals.

In a strong indictment of Mr Harshad Mehta, the CPP said not only had he the "despicable audacity to malign the Prime Minister but also the temerity to threaten with blackmail some unnamed members of the joint parliamentary committee."

In his speech, the Prime Minister said the Congress was ready to take on BJP on any issue that it sought to make an election issue. However, he added, "We are not ready for non-secular issues" and would not allow it to be used at the hustings.

He said the bill seeking to ban use of religion in public or electoral arena was ready and it would be introduced in the next monsoon session of Parliament.

Striking a sarcastic vein, the Prime Minister thanked the BJP president, Mr L. K. Advani, for saying that the Ram temple issue was no longer on their agenda.

"Let Ram mandir go out of the pale of politics of India. It is already gone because there is nothing left in their (BJP's) hands. We do not want credit for the temple. We do not want any other party to take credit. The temple will be built," he said adding "Forget the temple, forget the mosque. Whatever promised by the government in this regard will be done."

He said the BJP had not gained any political mileage out of its actions. The BJP, he observed, was seen as a "Hindu terrorist, Hindu extremist organisation in the world."

The Prime Minister said the attack mounted against him, the Congress party and the JPC was perhaps done with a view to scuttle the JPC or detract it from saying what it wanted to in its report, now in the final stages.

The JPC, he asserted, would not allow itself to be scuttled. "We cannot under any circumstances allow JPC to be scuttled or detracted."

Mr Rao said, "We will win and defeat the nefarious activities intended to divert the nation's attention. Together, the Congress is a force which cannot be vanquished."

The Prime Minister said the persons who launched the attack had an advantage because he had chosen the time, weapons, context and methodology of his attack, "but the advantage is short-lived."

In a hard-hitting speech, Mr Sitaram Kesri said the attack by Mr Harshad Mehta, a "BJP man," was the "biggest lie and treachery perpetrated by them. The conspiracy has been exposed."

Recalling what he termed as conspiracy to topple the Congress government, Mr B. Shankaranand said it was a "political game which has to be fought unitedly."

The Union home minister, Mr S. B. Chavan, stressed that action was needed instead of reaction to expose the opposition strategy.

Others who spoke at the meeting included: Mr Balram Jakhar, Mr A. R. Antulay, Mr Ramchandra Rath, Mr S. S. Ahluwalia and Mr Vilas Muttemwar.

The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, had a long meeting with Mr Rao here this evening. The meeting, held at the initiative of the Prime Minister, assumes significance in view of the current confabulations in the ruling party.

Mr Pawar merely confirmed the meeting but declined to say anything more as he had to rush to the airport to catch a flight for Bombay.

Mr V. C. Shukla, the parliamentary affairs minister who was briefing the press, was asked how was it that the Prime Minister clearly remembered that he had not received any money from Mr Harshad Mehta but could not recollect whether he had met the Bombay broker.

The minister said it was not the practice of the Prime Minister to accept money.

Mr Shukla said it was most likely that Mr Rao had not met the Bombay Broker. "But we will be in a position to state this categorically after checking the records."

Virtually ruling out the option of legal recourse through a defamation suit, Mr Shukla said, "It is a political onslaught on the Congress leadership and we will meet it politically."

To another question, he said this issue was outside the purview of the JPC since the period in question was November, 1991, when the scam had not broken out. "This is not a matter for scam probe."

Asked why the human resource development minister was not present at the CPP meeting, Mr Shukla said he was not aware of the reason for Mr Singh's absence.

Meanwhile, several Congress members of the joint parliamentary committee probing the securities scam today demanded that breach of privilege proceedings should be initiated against Mr Harshad Mehta for levelling charges against committee members.

In joint and separate letters to the JPC chairman, Mr Ram Niwas Mirdha, the Congress members of the committee insisted that the Bombay broker be forced to reveal the names of the members to whom he claimed to have paid money.

## Panel Investigates Scam, Government Workings

### Draft Report

93AS1002A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE  
in English 23 Jun 93 pp 1, 13

[Article: "JPC Indicts Manmohan, Shankaranand"; boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, June 22: The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probing the stocks scam in its draft report has indicted the Health Minister, Mr B. Shankaranand, for certain investments made during his tenure as Petroleum Minister. The JPC has also criticised the Finance Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, for failing to ensure proper and foolproof monitoring of the share market and checking booming prices of shares.

The JPC has found several irregularities in the functioning of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), foreign banks, the

Ministry of Finance and other regulatory outfits. It also established a nexus between various industrial houses, brokers and individual banks, apart from picking holes in the functioning of stock exchanges and investments made by some public sector units (PSUs).

The 462-page draft report of the committee covering 19 chapters, which was circulated among the members on Monday, detected several irregularities in so far as the investments by the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) during Mr Shankaranand's tenure as ex-officio chairman. He was Petroleum Minister at that time.

The report listed out 28 transactions involving Rs 544.51 crore made between March 31 to May 27, 1992. Seventeen transactions covering Rs 295.42 crore was invested with the Canbank Financial Services (Canfina), while eight transactions involving Rs 198.88 crore was invested with the Syndicate Bank by the OIDB.

Prior to March 31, 1992, investments had been made by the OIDB in certificates of deposits and fixed deposits. The OIDB began using other investments like the PMMs for the first time after March 31. This was described by the organisation as investment advisory service.

The report said the earlier investment procedures of the OIDB stipulated that sanction for deposits be accorded by the Secretary, OIDB, in April 1991, however, the rules were changed and the powers given to the Chairman, who is also the petroleum Minister.

Listing out various omissions and commissions made the OIDB, the JPC said the "contention of the then Chairman of the OIDB that transactions of deployment of funds in question were investments in instruments is not acceptable. Unavoidably such actions have created doubts that some institutions had received preferential treatment at the hands of OIDB."

The JPC continued: "In the light of these observations, the committee considers it a sad duty to conclude that the Chairman, OIDB, and others did not discharge their responsibilities in consonance with the high office held by them." The committee recommended that the government take necessary action in this issue.

With regard to the Finance Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, the committee said that the minister could have exercised much closer supervision of the entire banking and securities transactions. "Had this been done, the subsequent disorder in our economy could have been avoided."

The committee rejected the Finance Minister's statement before the JPC that his ministry was not accountable for the working of the Reserve Bank of India, the Department of Banking, Operations, and Development, and the capital markets on the grounds that they are independent bodies. Stating that "the accountability of a minister to parliament for anything happening under the charge of his ministry is absolute," the committee

declared that "such distinction cannot be sustained by constitutional jurisprudence."

The draft report said the Finance Minister's assertion that the rise in share prices in early 1992 was a consequence of the government's liberalisation policies was "misplaced." The Finance Minister "regrettably failed" to appreciate that even the most casual comment by him could influence the nation's economy.

"Even after this, the Finance Minister showed relative unconcern about the excessive speculation in stock markets saying that he loses no sleep on this account. This comment could best have been avoided," says the draft report.

It says while the mood of the government was upbeat in liberalisation, its orientation towards strict enforcement was yet to manifest itself.

"To make the process of liberalisation a success, it is necessary to have strategic checks and effective implementation of regulations... deregulation without effective checks and balances would be an unmitigated disaster," the sources quoted the draft report as saying.

The Finance Ministry's belief that the stock market boom in early 1992 was a reflection of the success of the government's new economic policies had hindered the effective regulation in the working of banks and stock markets, the committee feels.

The report says the ministry's "failure to ensure adherence to its own instructions contributed significantly to irregularities in the securities and banking transactions."

The JPC, however, agreed with the Finance Minister's contention that the solution did not lie in increasing the control of the Finance Ministry but in having greater professionalism on the part of the boards of directors of banks and financial institutions.

The committee also came down harshly on ANZ Grindlays, Bank of America, Citibank, Standard Chartered Bank and Bank of Oman for their role in the transactions and said that these banks have violated the laws of their own country as well as those in India.

It observed: "In a way they (foreign banks) are initiators of the scam as well as the major players." The draft report in view of their conduct and activities in the scam, the working of the foreign banks has to be strictly supervised.

"With their tremendous resources, undoubted clout and aggressive policies, they can, if they choose, play havoc with the economy," the report said.

The draft report recommends all private, public sector and foreign banks be brought under the purview of Parliament adding that the Standing Committee of the finance Ministry can be the body for overseeing the functioning of these banks.

Referring to the nexus between business houses and banks, the committee cited the instance of Vijaya Bank's deals with the Reliance Industries Limited. It pointed out that the bank sanctioned sales bills discounting limits to 14 corporate bodies, which were front companies of the Reliance Group amounting to Rs 69.35 crore. It also felt that the American Express Bank went out its way to favour the Reliance Group.

The JPC also recommended that a joint team of the Central Bureau of Investigation, Income Tax, the SEBI [Securities and Exchange Board of India], the Reserve Bank of India and Department of Company Affairs investigate the transaction between Andhra Bank Financial Services Limited and the Goldstar Group. On this account it came down heavily on the CBI for registering a preliminary probe into the transactions only on March 12, 1993, despite being informed about it on August 28, 1992. The preliminary probe began only after the matter was raised in Parliament.

### **Banks, Brokers Nexus**

93AS1002B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 25 Jun 93 pp 1, 13

[Article: "Banks, Brokers Nexus Revealed"; quotation marks as published]

[Text]

### **'Select Few Favoured'**

New Delhi, June 24. The Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC] probing the securities scam has unearthed a close nexus between banks and six brokers who conducted over 50 per cent of securities transactions for banks and financial institutions, report PTI and UNI.

The select brokers who benefitted from the diversion of disproportionate business to them included H. P. Dalal, Harshad Mehta, Somayajulu and Company, Batilwala and Karani, N. K. Aggarwala and Company and V. B. Desai and Associates.

"There were no prudential norm/exposure limit fixed for each broker," the committee observed in its 462-page draft report.

According to the Janakiraman committee report, about 58 per cent of the transactions during April, 1991 to May, 1992 of the value of Rs 7,43,604 crores were conducted by the banks and financial institutions through the brokers.

The committee pointed out that Harshad Mehta and N. K. Aggarwala had more than 50 per cent of the business in securities transactions in the State Bank of India.

The Bank of Karad with its paid-up capital of Rs 30.72 lakhs, had entered into 534 transactions involving various securities of the aggregate face value of Rs 7,186 crores between April 1, 1991 and May 25, 1992 on behalf



of or on the instructions of a single broker, A. D. Narottam, the committee observed.

The committee noted that trading of securities by the bank, having all its 43 branches in Maharashtra (except one in Belgaum, Karnataka), was almost confined to its broker clients.

The bank had 23 broker clients of whom only few like Bhupendra Champaklal Devidas, A. D. Narottam, Excel and company and Darshaw and Company were active.

The committee noted that several brokers had been on the board of directors of the two banks. Broker Bhupen Dalal had been the director of the Bank of Karad on many occasions, his son M. C. Dalal became a director from July 1991 while Abhay Narottam retired as director in December 1991.

"The account of Mr Narottam was beset with most of the irregularities," the committee observed.

The RBI said it had raised such objections against Canara Bank, Syndicate Bank, United Bank of India, Punjab and Sindh Bank, Punjab National Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, Shanghai Bank, Central Bank of India, Bank of Mathura and several other banks.

The committee observed that scrutiny of security transactions in a number of banks revealed that some banks were even handing over A/c payee cheques drawn in favour of other banks to the brokers who got them credited to their account ostensibly to assist the latter in transferring funds quickly to met their obligations.

As per informal understanding, the payee-bank used to credit the proceeds to the account of the broker constituent who brought the cheque to it for collection.

These practices, the committee noted, were in gross violation of the instruction that the accounts of banks with RBI, should be utilised only for genuine inter-bank transactions and not for transfer of funds to their clients.

Citing an example, the committee said the payment of Rs 707.56 crores by SBI to National Housing Bank illustrated a glaring instance of the serious extent of the damage caused by allowing credit of interbank cheques to the brokers' accounts.

In its report, the committee pointed out that during 1991-92, SBI had issued RBI cheques in favour of National Housing Bank [NHB] and had received from NHB, RBI cheques in favour of SBI at the instance of Harshad Mehta.

These debits and credits were accounted through the current account of the Bombay broker, maintained at the Bombay main branch.

According the draft report, many brokers like Harshad and others, used some of the banks as "routing" banks for carrying large volume of securities transactions for them.

"Thus, Andhra Bank, UCO Bank, Bank of Karad, Bank of Madura and Andhra Bank Financial Services Limited carried transactions of the value of over Rs 77,000 crores for others during April, 1991 to May, 1992."

These banks thus provided special privilege to a select few brokers by lending their names to the transactions of these brokers totally disproportionate to the income derived and exposed themselves to great risk by irregularly issuing their own BRs or SGL transfer forms against BRs received or to be received in their favour, the committee said.

Another "unhealthy practice" observed by the committee was banks resorting to "netting" of various transactions. This system of reflecting only the net position for the day on purchases and sales of securities concealed the details of various transactions and prevented a scrutiny of the judiciousness and genuineness of the deals, it said.

The committee observed that brokers managed to get finances from banks for their badla transactions in flagrant violation of RBI guidelines.

For instance, ANZ Grindlays Bank placed in one known case, an amount of Rs 2 crores with broker Aggarwala for a period of five months and in another a sum of Rs 24 lakhs was placed under similar arrangements for 40 days.

In some cases, the banks parted with their own securities for the benefit of broker clients. Securities routed to the broker clients, in several instances, had been acquired by banks under ready forward transactions and the brokers were then allowed to close these transactions with the counter party/other banks at wide differentials resulting in a large accrual of funds to them, the report added.

The JPC chairman, Mr Ram Niwas Mirdha, however, declined to comment on the draft report of the committee, which was widely published in newspapers, saying "wait for the final draft."

When asked if the final report would be different from the draft report, Mr Mirdha said "that was for the committee to decide."

[Box, p 1]

#### Harshad To Face JPC on June 30

New Delhi, June 24: The joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probing the securities scandal has granted permission to stockbroker Harshad Mehta to appear before it on June 30 at 3 p.m., according to his counsel, reports PTI.

The special court trying the scam-related offences, presided over by Mr Justice S. N. Variava, has also granted Mr Mehta the permission to go to Delhi either tomorrow or one day prior to the date fixed by the JPC.

The court permitted the broker to inspect and take photocopies of certain documents which are in the custody of CBI, Mr Mahesh Jethmalani, the counsel, said.

Under a revised schedule, the CBI director, Mr S. K. Datta, and other officials of the agency will depose before the committee tomorrow, the CBI officials were earlier slated to be examined today.

### Government Malfunction

93AS1002C Madras *THE HINDU in English*  
26 Jun 93 p 9

[Article: "Entire Government Apparatus Malfunctioned: JPC"; boldface words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, June 25. "The state of the country's governance, adherence to regulations, an alarming decay in the banking system and the questionable viability of some of the nationalised banks were fully exposed" by the securities scam, says the draft report of the joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC).

"The irregularities in banking and securities transactions have exposed malfunctioning in the entire apparatus of governance. All this has had a traumatic effect on the nation," the report adds.

"An unfortunate aspect of the prevailing situation is that a culture of non-accountability has permeated all sections of the Government over the years... the ability of the Government to address itself to such a crisis and then manage it was put to test," the JPC said.

"The consequences of the securities and banking transactions irregularities are both financial and moral," the report pointed out. But, several people responsible for this have yet not been "effectively punished," the chapter, entitled "Scam—and Overview," observed.

Referring to the three elements of the scam-banks, brokers, public sector undertakings, ministries—the draft said: "Here accountability was largely absent, punishment for a wrong committed rare, an ethos of non-implementation prevailed all around."

Another aspect about which the committee expresses its grave concern is the supervisory role and responsibility. Supervision failed from top to bottom, it pointed out.

PTI reports:

**Special agency to probe end use:** The JPC expressed its inability to trace the 'final destination' of Rs 12,85,549 crores estimated to be involved in the scam.

The JPC admitted that it had 'no such expertise and was not equipped' to trace the end use aspect of the scam and recommended that a team of specialists be constituted by the Finance Ministry to identify the end use of money involved in the questionable transactions.

The proposed committee may be given six months to complete its task and suggested that its report be presented to Parliament.

The committee also advised the Central Board of Direct Taxes to undertake a similar exercise.

It observed that tracing of funds to their final destinations is the task of a team of specialists in the fields of accountancy, taxation and criminal investigation.

**CBI probe against Air India top brass:** The Joint Parliamentary Committee has recommended a CBI inquiry against top Air India officials responsible for irregular deployment of surplus funds with Indian and foreign banks in ready-forward purchase and sale of securities.

In its draft report, the committee has come down heavily on Air India's failure to obtain securities in its transactions and held it guilty of tampering with records. The Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Air India, Mr Y. C. Deveshwar, who assumed office on November 13, 1991, had stated before the committee that he knew about the irregularities in investments on July 24, 1992, but he had never discussed with the officials concerned details of investment of surplus funds until these were pointed out by the auditors of Air India.

The chief executive should have kept himself informed of the manner of investment of sizeable surplus funds of the corporation, the report said. "If that had been done, irregularities could have been detected earlier."

Air India apportioned the blame for the irregular investments to Mr S. R. Gupte, former Deputy Managing Director who was M.D. in charge, Mr J. A. Sidhwa, Deputy Director (Finance) and Mr K. Raghunathan, Assistant Financial Controller. Both Mr Sidhwa and Mr Raghunathan maintained that they followed the verbal instructions of Mr Gupte.

### Congress, Leftists, Said Allowing Religion Into Politics

93AS0970A Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH in English* 1 Jul 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Jaundiced Politics"]

[Text] The votaries of Hindutva are apparently not very happy with the recent pronouncement of the four shankaracharyas. The latter have declared the construction of a Ram temple at the former site of the Babri Masjid should be looked after by an apolitical body. The implication is the sangh parivar should not have anything to do with the building of the temple. Thus, despite it having launched the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the ultimate prize is in danger of eluding the Hindu political family. The possibility of a conflict between two groups of sadhus will emerge should the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP] decide to challenge the sacred writ of the shankaracharyas. The sangh parivar's apprehensions may,

however, be premature. Its goal has been the construction of a temple and this seems to have been accepted as the premise of the discussion by the four holy men. The sangh parivar's might be the rare privilege of having a major chunk of its political agenda carried through by a group which claims to be apolitical.

The solution to the problem which peaked with the vandalism on December 6, 1992 is gradually slipping out of the hands of secular forces. This is largely the fault of the Congress leadership which has not been able to formulate a cohesive strategy on Ayodhya. Initially it dithered. After the catastrophe of December 6 it declared a ban on sections of the sangh parivar. The ban was subsequently declared legally invalid. The ruling party compounded these feeble measures by actively encouraging Chandraswami's som yagna. There is reason to believe sections of the Congress arranged the recent conclave of the shankaracharyas. India's largest political organisation has failed to confront the communal problem in political and secular terms. It has sought to fight one kind of religious faith with another kind. This has had the unfortunate consequence of four religious leaders intervening directly in a political matter. It is inexplicable a government which is considering legislation on the separation of religion and politics should allow men in ochre robes to set the terms of political discourse.

It would be simplistic to blame only the Congress for the bankruptcy in Indian secularism. The left has been equally guilty in its inability to combat majority fundamentalism. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] has soft pedalled obscurantist forces. In West Bengal, it has permitted the cadaver of Balak Brahmachari to lie uncremated for almost two months. This, only because the holy man's disciples claimed he would come back to life. Such pampering defies logic and decency. It gives religious elements the ability to determine public life. The declaration of the shankaracharyas and the failings of those avowedly opposed to religious fundamentalism are tragic signs of the disappearance of secularism from the political agenda.

### **RSS Seen Resuming Role as Guiding Force of 'Hindutva'**

#### **Winning Over Secularism**

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[Article by Manini Chatterjee: "The Hindutva Nexus: Advani's BJP Under RSS Dictates"; quotation marks and italicized words as published]

[Text] The second half of June will be an important period for the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) and its many affiliates, euphemistically referred to nowadays as the 'Sangh parivar.' The national executive and national council meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) takes place in Bangalore from June 16 to 20 where

L. K. Advani will formally take up his third term as party president. The 'Dharm Sansad' of the sadhus and sants led by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) is scheduled to be held in Hardwar on June 22 and 23, and in the same week the central working committee of the RSS will hold a crucial meeting at its headquarters in Nagpur. The BJP leadership will come out with lofty resolutions on the economic and political situation in the country. The 'Dharm Sansad' in all likelihood will spell out the next phase of its building plans at Ayodhya. The small coterie of RSS leaders will probably say nothing, but it is they—and not the sadhus or the members of the country's main Opposition party—who will determine the future course of the *Hindutva* movement and direct the roles to be played by the BJP, the VHP or any of its other affiliates.

The BJP, in recent years, has witnessed a phenomenal rise in its membership. The party claims its current membership stands at around 95 lakhs. The massive influx of new recruits, mostly from a non-RSS background, coupled with the open and widespread infighting in the party has led to a growing belief that the RSS is losing its grip on the BJP or that the BJP is moving away from its RSS moorings. This is far from true. Over the last few years, the BJP has become more and more enmeshed with the RSS, and things have now reached a point where the BJP is nothing without the RSS.

The BJP had—and lost—the chance of carving out its own identity as a political party operating within the political arena and offering political solutions to the many problems facing the country. Instead, it narrowed down its options further and further to become one of the many wings of the shadowy and secretive RSS, guided solely by the simplistic pseudo-ideology of the RSS, relying entirely on the RSS organisation, and wholly dependent on 'RSS work' for its own electoral gain. Today, the BJP's greatest strength lies in its relationship with the RSS, but beyond a point (and the point will come sooner or later), it will also lead to its nemesis.

Advani has often been credited with taking the BJP closer to the RSS by adopting the strident *Hindutva* line after he became party president in 1986. Advani himself denies this, and in earlier interviews always emphasised that the BJP was a natural and non-apologetic affiliate of the RSS because the party came into being on the question of the RSS.

Technically, this is true. The BJP's predecessor, the Jan Sangh, did not have any organisation links with the RSS. The founder of the Jan Sangh, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, belonged to the Hindu Mahasabha. When he decided to float a new party, he sought the help of the then RSS chief, M. S. Golwalkar. Golwalkar himself was against 'RSS' direct involvement in politics, and the RSS constitution, written as a precondition to the lifting of the ban imposed on its following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, also declared that the RSS "had no politics and is devoted to social work." But after the



lifting of the ban, many RS cadres wanted to play a more overtly political role in independent India.

There were two streams operating within the RSS then and they continue to do so to this day. One section wanted the RSS to devote itself to the task of "character building" while the other wanted to get directly involved in politics. Golwalkar managed to accommodate both streams by "lending" leading RSS cadres to the Jan Sangh while keeping the RSS above and aloof from day-to-day politics. Among the first batch of RSS men deputed to the Jan Sangh were Advani and Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Though the Jan Sangh maintained close links with the RSS and most of its northern units were set up by former RSS pracharaks, the party had no organisational links and included non-RSS men in leadership positions. In 1977, the Jan Sangh merged into the Janata Party. This decision was also guided by the RSS which assumed an activist role in the years before and during the Emergency. The RSS leadership came out in support of Jayaprakash Narayan's "Total Revolution," and RSS cadres were encouraged, in their individual capacity, to involve themselves in joining non-Communist Opposition activity.

It was in 1979 when the internal quarrels within the Janata Party became acute that "dual membership" became a major issue of controversy. Erstwhile members of the Jan Sangh, now integrated in the Janata Party, were asked to give up their membership of the RSS but they refused. The former Jan Sanghis argued that the RSS was not a political but a cultural organisation while the secular elements in the Janata insisted that the RSS exerted enormous political influence and was a political entity even if it were not a political party in the formal sense of the term.

Finally, the Jan Sanghis broke away, and in 1980, they along with a few token non-Sanghis formed the BJP. Thus Advani's insistence that the BJP is naturally linked with the RSS because it was formed over the question of dual membership.

However, Advani's assertion notwithstanding, the record of the BJP goes to show that the close identification with the RSS is a post-1986 phenomenon. Though the BJP was formed partly as a result of the dual membership issue, the party did not go back to being Jan Sangh but tried to chart out a new path. Unlike the Jan Sangh which was formed with the aim of restoring Hindu supremacy in independent India, the BJP was initially guided by the RSS legacy as well as the JP movement.

In the first few years, specifically from 1980 to 1984, Vajpayee tried to bring the BJP more and more into the mainstream of Opposition politics, experimented with the woolly ideas of Gandhian socialism, and talked of secularism. Since the Jan Sangh ideology had failed to make it an alternative to the Congress, the BJP thought it would try a different tactic, pushing communal issues and its links with the RSS to the background.

It was the 1984 elections, when the Congress(I) played a blatantly communal card and won a landslide victory, that changed the BJP's thinking. Though the BJP leadership has repeatedly denied that the RSS worked for the Congress(I) in the 1984 elections, it admits that the RSS base (that is, those who are influenced by the RSS worldview but not its members) did shift to the Congress(I) because the party was seen to be taking up the issue of national unity and integrity which strikes a deep chord in the RSS-minded people. Of course, it was not the issue of national unity per se but the Congress(I)'s 1984 campaign which portrayed the Sikh minority as the enemy threatening the Hindu majority that attracted the RSS support base over to the Congress(I).

But the 1984 elections taught the still-fledgling BJP two important lessons—first, it showed that there was a Hindu vote in the making which the BJP ought to nurture and capture rather than let it be usurped by the Congress(I); and second, that it could not take RSS support for granted. The second lesson has been of crucial importance. The RSS, time and again, has made it clear that it is more interested in reaching the goal of Hindu Rashtra and not the vehicle by which to reach it.

From the late 1940s to this day, the RSS leadership has wanted to influence the political direction of the country without directly participating in the electoral process. To this end, the RSS has sought to send its key men into politics while retaining in its hands the strings to control them. In fact, the RSS would have preferred to work through the Congress rather than lend its men to a new party with a limited mass base.

Referring to the RSS-Jan Sangh links, the authors of *The Brotherhood in Saffron* (W. Andersen and Shrinidhar D. Damle) state: "Almost fourteen months elapsed between Mookerjee's resignation from the cabinet in early 1950 and his decision to form a new nationalist party. The evidence suggests that both Mookerjee and Golwalkar hesitated to make any final plans until the leadership struggle in the congress was resolved. Should Patel's group have emerged victorious, the record indicates that both Mookerjee and Golwalkar would have extended support to the Congress. When the All-India Congress Committee [AICC] elected Nehru party president at its 8 September 1951 meeting, this political option was closed."

While Nehru managed to limit the RSS to a fringe phenomenon, his daughter in her later years gave *Hindutva*, if not the RSS itself, the political legitimacy it so desired. The RSS never had the same aversion towards Indira Gandhi as it had towards Nehru, and to this day, it has not given up the option of capturing or coopting the Congress(I) or at least important sections of it. The late RSS leader Bhaurao Deoras' fulsome praise for P. V. Narasimha Rao and his soft saffron approach even after December 6, indicates the continuing possibility of a not-so-covert entente between the RSS and what shall remain of the Congress.

But this possibility also ensures that the BJP will not distance itself from the RSS because in the political arena the BJP still sees the Congress(I) as the adversary. At a later stage, if the BJP succeeds in eroding the Congress(I) to insignificance, both parties can together take on the secular Opposition as their joint enemy (on the lines of the pattern evolved in the West Bengal panchayat elections), but as of now, the BJP needs the RSS' full backing.

From 1986 onwards, the BJP has gradually shed all efforts to carve out a political identity and has become increasingly a single-issue (Ram Janmabhoomi) party. The key reason for this, of course, is not some irrational love for the RSS but the electoral dividends this issue has paid. For a complex variety of reasons, such as the decay of the Nehruvian enterprise, the emergence of new middle classes in urban and semi-urban India, and the growing threat perception of the mostly upper-caste elites, substantial sections have been swayed by the simplistic, hate-filled macho religio-politics of the RSS and its affiliates. The RSS has done most of the work to create this base; the BJP has merely lapped up the electoral consequences.

It was the RSS-organised nationwide Hedgewar birth centenary celebrations in 1989 followed by the even more extensive Ram Shila puja programme that spread the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue in large parts of the country and laid the ground for the BJP's electoral campaign.

But the importance of the RSS for the BJP is not because of these recent instances alone. It lies in the uniqueness of the relationship itself. The RSS is often likened to the "mother" in the family and the affiliates as here children. That assumes that the children get sustenance and inspiration from the "mother" but eventually acquire a separate identity. This does not reflect the real nature of the relationship between the RSS and the rest of the "family." In reality, the RSS is more like the sun, and the other planets revolving around it, having no light of their own and destined to oblivion if they seek to get out of its orbit.

The secretive nature of the RSS organisation, its thoroughly undemocratic character and its total control over the minds of its cadres all ensure the supremacy of the RSS within the Saffron Brigade. By claiming to be a "cultural" organisation, not directly involved with politics, the RSS can hide from the public eye and at the same time exert mass influence, directly and through its affiliates. Elections never take place in the RSS and the outgoing chief nominates his successor. The organisation's source of funding remains secret. Its greatest strength lies in the unquestioning loyalty it evokes from its cadres.

In order to do this, the RSS usually recruits young boys in their early teens, who are not encouraged to question or think. They are taught a simple and emotive set of lessons to drive home the point that India was a great country and will regain its glory if Hindu men unite and

eliminate or at least subjugate the minorities, particularly Muslims. The "boys," who spend their most impressionable years in the "shakhas," develop a life-long attachment to the RSS and its simple and highly dangerous philosophy. Though the RSS self-image is that of being a supremely nationalist organisation which imbues its cadres with selfless patriotism, in reality the RSS patriotism is entirely negative and its primary facet is invoking hatred towards the minorities.

More than the RSS ideology (which is nothing more than a hate-Muslim agenda and offers nothing in terms of an alternative vision to free India of its myriad miseries), it is its organisation that has played a major role in bringing the *Hindutva* forces to centre-stage. The RSS today runs around 30,000 shakhas throughout the country. The shakhas were suspended following the ban imposed in December 1992 but were revived as soon as the P. K. Bahri Tribunal struck down the ban in June.

The RSS was formed in 1925 but in the decades that have elapsed, there has been no change in the content or style of its teaching. The periodic ban on it have not curbed its activities. Though the Indian state till recently was avowedly secular, the RSS operated extensively in civil society and spread its tentacles deep and wide among large sections of the people. If one accepts well known writer Achin Vanaik's definition of communalism as the "desecularisation" of both civil society and state, the RSS, more than any other organisation, has been instrumental in this process in the arena of civil society and in recent years has made inroads into the Indian state as well.

The authors of *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags* noted, "... for more than sixty years now, the quiet but extremely effective 'cultural' work of the RSS has been spreading these ideas and emotions, (of *Hindutva*) till they seem to have been internalised into the common sense of certain social groups in large parts of the country."

This "cultural" work has been carried out by numerous affiliates floated by the RSS of which only a few, such as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh and the VHP, are well known. The RSS cadres have been active in the field of education, setting up a nationwide chain of schools under the auspices of the Vidya Bharatiya movement. It has affiliates working among the tribals and low castes but all this work is guided by the overall aim of establishing upper-caste Hindu hegemony which is under threat from the ideals of equality and secularism.

Thus, the RSS work among the tribals and oppressed castes is not motivated by a humane vision of a casteless society but only in order to prevent large-scale conversions to Christianity or Islam. Its "cultural" work has also played a major role in spreading communalism and fomenting riots. To quote the authors of

*Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags*, "at least three commissions of inquiry—Reddy, Vythayathil, Venugopal—have found RSS inspiration behind anti-Muslim and anti-Christian riots, not so much in direct cadre participation but through long-term and sustained communal propaganda."

In recent years, the spurt in its growth and reach has been spurred on by two factors. The RSS has succeeded to a great extent in portraying itself as the champion of the entire Hindu community and effectively glossed over the deep intra-Hindu conflicts that threaten its upper-caste support base. The focus on the "other," the Muslim enemy, stems from the need to deflect caste and class conflicts that are bound to rise in India. Secondly, and linked to the first, is the *Hindutva* movement's success in depicting itself as the voice of the "masses" fighting against the secularism of a small, Westernised elite.

The success of their campaign is such that even committed secularists have begun to accept the erroneous view that secularism is an elite concept. The reality is that it is the *Hindutva* forces who represent the interests of the "haves" and use religion to obfuscate the real bread and water issues that matter to millions in India. The fast pace at which "scuppies" have joined the BJP, the inroads RSS thinking has made into important pillars of the establishment, including the judiciary and the military, and the enthusiastic support to *Hindutva* from rich overseas Indians all underline the elite nature of the RSS' new base, its mass trappings notwithstanding.

But while the BJP has now got itself inextricably linked with the RSS and has gained a lot of ground by that association, it will face major problems in the years to come. The RSS has made it clear it has no real agenda except "liberating" more temples, abashing Muslims, Hinduising Kashmir. The RSS joint secretary, Prof. Rajendra Singh, has already declared that the "liberation" of the Mathura and Varanasi temples is very much on the RSS agenda. The BJP has kept quiet for the moment but it will not be long before it also adds the two temples to its list.

The real problem for the BJP is that while it needs the RSS to gain power, it cannot run governments in a democratic set-up by following the RSS dictates. Periodic pogroms against minorities cannot substitute state policy. The BJP, as a political party, could have worked out a range of policy alternatives on matters ranging from the economy to ecology, but intoxicated by the success of the "Hindu card," the party has abandoned all such efforts and has become an appendage of the RSS.

The BJP, thus, has increased its electoral base because of the RSS but has severely limited its political manoeuvrability. The BJP, which could have filled the role of a conservative or right-of-centre party operating within the parameters of India's quasi-liberal democracy, will

now have to operate wholly on the dictates of an RSS-controlled state and resort to increasingly authoritarian methods to quell dissent and democracy.

The rapid expansion of both the RSS and the BJP is also likely to lead to problems. The supremacy of the RSS within the Saffron Brigade stems from the fact that its leaders and key cadres are "aloof" from electoral politics and are therefore seen as superior creatures untainted by the greed and corruption that the pursuit of power entails. The RSS is also not accountable to the public and its leaders can exercise iron control over the organisation and its affiliates. But with the massive influx of new cadres, the RSS leadership may not be able to exercise the same degree of control. The high visibility of the *Hindutva* movement of late has also ensured that the RSS can no longer hide itself from public and press scrutiny.

Moreover, as the combine appears to get closer to power in the States as well as the Centre, many more of the RSS cadres would prefer to join politics rather than be content with the task of "character building." The open differences among the top RSS-trained leadership of the BJP has shown that no RSS cadre is immune from the virus of politicking. The formation of the Bajrang Dal and the rowdiness of its stormtroopers also show that the famed RSS discipline cannot be stretched beyond a point.

As things stand today, the iron-frame of the RSS can start crumbling because of the expansion of the organisation, unless the leadership turns more and more authoritarian in order to maintain its hold over the saffron empire. The RSS leadership is already moving in that direction. The re-election of Advani as BJP president will help finetune the RSS-BJP relationship further.

Of greater importance will be the nomination of the new RSS sarsanghchalak. Given the nature of the RSS organisation, the character of its chief plays a crucial role in charting out the direction of the movement. Of late, there has been some disorientation in the RSS because of the lack of direction from its ailing chief, Balasahab Deoras, as well as the inability to hold daily shakhas because of the ban. Even the half-hearted ban on the RSS did help in reducing the iron control of the leadership over the organisation.

If the Narasimha Rao Government is interested in breaking the backbone of the *Hindutva* movement at all, it could have used the ban effectively to disorient the RSS cadres and disperse the organisation. After all, despite its bravado, the RSS has always shirked the difficulties of operating underground. In 1947-48 and again during the Emergency, RSS leaders pleaded with the Government to lift the ban and allow them to operate freely.

The Government's inability to make out even a preliminary case against the RSS led to the lifting of the ban by the Bahri panel. This, along with the string of court judgements in favour of the RSS and the BJP, has been the biggest boost that the organisation has ever received. The secular response to the communal challenge has so far been weak, directionless, and in the case of the



Congress(I), compromising. Having succeeded in the first round of the battle against secularism, the RSS has now to face the challenges from within.

### Controlling BJP

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[Article by Praveen Swami: "BJP Battles: The True Colors of Hindutva"; italicized words as published]

[Text] "The real fight in our party," a disgusted Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) worker said after factional disputes led to fistfights during organisational elections in Delhi recently, "is not over issues but between a *sai* and a *munshi*."

This derogatory reference to L. K. Advani's Sindhi origin, and Murli Manohar Joshi's perceived cow-belt bureaucratic arrogance, indeed reflects the sentiments of many party workers, who find that while power dangles tantalisingly close to their grasp, the party seems more adrift than ever before. Yet, the fact is that the disputes within the BJP, which have surfaced clearly during the recently-conducted organisational elections in several States, go deeper than personality conflicts. For the BJP's State units, power has proved to be a two-edged sword.

In a sense, the origins of the crisis date back to the election of M. M. Joshi as party president in Nagpur in 1991. Joshi found himself a leader without a constituency. He had neither the charisma of Advani, nor the quiet credibility of Vajpayee. His desperate attempts to establish himself as a national leader led, perhaps inevitably, to disaster. The fiasco of the Ekta Yatra when Joshi abandoned his followers in Jammu and flew to Srinagar to unfurl the national flag under heavy security cover, provoked the derision of the media and the contempt of party workers. Then came the very public laundering of the party's dirty linen, provoked by the Govindacharya-Uma Bharati episode.

It became clear that all was not well within the BJP, but Joshi was bailed out then by senior leaders who felt Govindacharya's attitude to authority was, at best, casual.

The basic problem—that of Joshi's legitimacy—remained unresolved, however. It was at this point that he began actively attempting to create a power base of his own within influential State units. In retrospect, the early signs of this process were only too subtle. Stories were planted in the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) organ *Panchjanya* insinuating links between the staff of then Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Then Joshi fostered a minor revolt of upper-caste, mainly Brahmin, MLAs [Member of Legislative Assembly] against the backward-caste Chief Minister. Many of the younger State leaders Advani had promoted, including Bombay's

Pramod Mahajan, were systematically rubbed the wrong way by their anew political boss.

The consequences of this kind of bickering were evident to the BJP-RSS hierarchy quite early on. In the wake of the caste politics in Uttar Pradesh, the national executive of the BJP, during its Bhubaneshwar conference last November, came to an informal decision to remove Joshi quietly.

The devastating crisis in Ayodhya, however, changed all these calculations. Joshi responded to the situation with aggressive, nakedly fascist rhetoric. The RSS hierarchy, now officially banned, was distinctly unhappy with his street-fighting bravado, but found itself in an awkward position. For one thing, with the RSS and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) banned, organisational elections to the party's executive positions had to be cancelled. More important, Joshi's hardline posture had won him sympathy with the *Hindutva* hard core. When the State organisational elections finally got under way, the battlelines were clearly drawn, and the rival camps had had time to mobilise their armies.

The first serious battle broke out in May in Madhya Pradesh, during the election for the presidency of the State unit. Lakhiram Agarwal, backed by the party's officialdom, was strongly challenged by former Chief Minister and Cabinet Minister under Sunderlal Patwa, Kailash Joshi. Kailash Joshi was, from the dissidents' perspective, an ideal front man. Ostentatiously religious, and no minor political heavyweight, he was widely expected to give Agarwal a run for his money. Over 25 major State BJP figures, including several dissident members of Patwa's Cabinet, had thrown their weight behind him. Behind these forces was a disgruntled former Chief Minister, V. K. Saklecha, who had been defeated by Agarwal at the last organisational elections two years ago. For the first time overt campaigning was visible in the course of a BJP party poll, and many journalists were startled by the rows of gleaming jeeps and cars outside the poll venue in Bhopal.

The newfound prosperity visible outside the BJP's half-built new offices in Bhopal was, perhaps, metaphorically appropriate. During his tenure in office, Patwa had made enemies within his own party, and the challenge from the dissidents represented a bid by those who felt that they were being denied a legitimate share of the spoils of power. The voting, on May 29, indicated that the numbers of those with a stake in the new dispensation had grown enormously. Some 329 of the 336 voting delegates of the state party participated in the election, while at the last election only 204 had voted. Agarwal had no difficulty in hanging on to his position: he secured 224 votes against Joshi's 98. Despite the vigorous campaign by the dissidents, the party hierarchy had won out.

Events in U.P., where elections were under way at the same time, followed a more convoluted course. Since the days of the 'Brahmin revolt' instigated by M. M. Joshi,

relations between him and Kalyan Singh were deeply fractured. The State party had virtually split into two, backed by Joshi on the one side and Vajpayee and Advani on the other. The key figure in this battle was State party chief Kalraj Mishra, who was fighting for a second term. Mishra, who had been a key figure in Joshi's game-playing in the State, had, in his term in office, managed to mend fences with the Chief Minister. Joshi's camp, not surprisingly, saw this as a gross betrayal, and opposed his renomination.

The party hierarchy played its cards well. It was made clear to Joshi's group that no contest would be tolerated in a key State like U. P. Word was put out that the RSS wanted Mishra in office, effectively silencing any murmurs of protest. While dissidents privately complained about this curious form of democracy by *diktat*, no one had the courage to file any alternative nomination for the State presidency. Some dissidents darkly muttered they were waiting for an 'opportune moment' to expose Mishra, but on polling day clearly they felt the moment had not come. When Sikander Bakht arrived in Lucknow on May 29, all he had to do was to announce Mishra's unanimous election. The electoral college further empowered Mishra to nominate 85 members from the State to the party's national executive. The coup was complete.

In Delhi, however, the cracks proved less easy to paper over. The local unit is probably one of the most affluent of any party unit nationally. Backed by influential sectors of the powerful and affluent trading community in Delhi, many of whose members are refugees of Partition in Punjab, the BJP in Delhi is, as one party MP jokingly puts it, "*Hindustan's* milch cow." This year trouble erupted into full public view, after Delhi MP Kalka Dass quit the post of party election officer following charges levelled against him by local senior vice-president Charti Lal Goel. In late May, Goel reportedly accused Dass of interfering with *samiti* (block, the lowest level) elections, and of ignoring malpractices in polling in the Vishnu Garden area.

Dass' resignation on May 22 came as a bombshell. It exposed the resentment Delhi's influential BJP stalwarts Vijay Kumar Malhotra and Madan Lal Khurana had felt when a relative non-entity, O. P. Kohli, was nominated the official candidate for the local presidency. Following Dass' resignation, the antagonism came out in the open, and the 'dissident' group, largely oldtime BJP workers with a Punjabi background, attacked new RSS figures including Kohli. While Khurana and Malhotra found support from party heavyweights like Kidar Nath Sahani, Kohli's support came from hardcore, right-wing RSS activists like East Delhi MP B. L. Sharma 'Prem.' By May 30 matters had got completely out of hand, and, on two occasions the police had to be called in to contain fistfights between supporters of rival camps. The elections, supposed to begin at 5 p.m., were abruptly postponed.

A facade of order was restored the next day, when Malhotra and Khurana were summoned to meet L. K. Advani and BJP vice-president Sundar Singh Bhandari. Sources say the Delhi partymen were subjected to a 90-minute harangue on the merits of discipline, and reminded of the tragic fate of expelled former Jan Sangh chief Balraj Madhok. Advani, say the sources, made it plain that Kohli, a quiet Delhi University academic with no major political power base, was the RSS' choice. No dissent, he said, would be tolerated. A face-saving gesture was eventually made: Kidar Nath Sahani was offered the nomination over the telephone, and, predictably enough, refused it. On June 1, Kohli won unopposed.

The game plan behind the controversies in the three State units becomes clear when one considers the quiet reelection of L. K. Advani as president. While a desperate Joshi had tried to assert his claims to continued power in the party hierarchy through his proxies in the States, by June 3 these proxies had been completely silenced. Up to that day, the deadline for filing nominations, the returning officer for the polls, Vishnu Kant Shastri, had received nine sets of papers. All were in favour of Advani. The RSS leadership had clearly twisted several dissident arms extremely hard: Murli Manohar Joshi's signature was appended to the first of the nominations. From Madhya Pradesh, where Joshi's proxies had tried particularly hard to establish a presence, there were two sets of nominations, one signed by former Chief Minister Sunderlal Patwa and the other by his arch rival, Kailash Joshi.

On the afternoon of June 3, S. S. Bhandari, clearly triumphant, answered questions from the press. Did the fact that Joshi had not received a single nomination in his favour, asked one journalist, mean he was completely unpopular? Bhandari replied with an emphatic 'no.'

"The performance or non performance" of the former party president, he said, "did not figure in the decision." He asserted that the key factor in the new order was the perceived need for 'change.'

The truth was a little different. The one lesson learnt from the BJP's disastrous Delhi rally was that Joshi's crass, confrontationist style was not getting the party anywhere. It had also become apparent that general elections were not around the corner. And that meant the BJP desperately needed a leader with insight and vision, qualities conspicuously absent in Joshi.

On June 5, the charioteer of the rath yatra, and the architect of the BJP's massive electoral gains of 1991 was formally declared the new BJP president. No voting needed to take place, since there were no other contenders. The immediate task before him is to weld together a fractious party, and to prepare for political battle in the cow belt and Delhi. Joshi, say BJP sources, will have no role in the new apparatus, and his proxies will be suitably dealt with. Atal Behari Vajpayee, who

did not endear himself to the RSS by apologising publicly for the fascist outrage at Ayodhya, will not find real power in the new set-up either, but will most probably be given a sinecure as Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. (Meanwhile, Joshi's appointment as head of the Physics Department of Allahabad University, apparently portending his complete eviction from the BJP hierarchy, has touched off a flurry of protests in academic circles).

The triumph of the RSS is, therefore, complete. But what are the lessons the Sangh *parivar* has learnt from the current round of infighting? After all, dissent is not altogether new in the saffron brotherhood. Mauli Chand Sharma, president of the Jan Sangh, was unceremoniously dumped in the 1950s, as was Balraj Madhok two decades later. What Joshi's two years in office really showed the party's hierarchy was that leaders were important, as were ideas, and that the 'small-groupism' of the RSS was outdated in a very urgent sense. The basic objectives of the RSS have now been met: the inept Joshi is out of the way, and proxies of the organisation have been placed in important States.

The fact is that the disputes, while framed by the grand politics of the Sangh *parivar* hierarchy, had as much to do with local politics as with the schisms at the top. In a sense, V. K. Saklecha and the U.P. dissidents were able to rebel only because they found patronage in the party's centre of power. More important, however, is the fact that the BJP's experience of government has meant that its members have, for the first time, acquired a real stake in power. And, as the party has been transformed from a clique to a mass organisation, it has inevitably encountered grassroots politics of a kind it never had to face before.

"The Congress may be a sinking ship," says a senior BJP MP, "but we know it has no intention of sinking in a hurry." Whether a restive membership is willing to wait quietly for the RSS elders to scuttle the vessel, time alone will tell.

### Illegal Activities Unhindered

93AS0965C Madras FRONTLINE in English  
2 Jul 93 pp 10-12

[Article by Venkitesh Ramakrishnan: "Powerless Punch: It Was Business as Usual for RSS"]

[Text] "*Veeron, arunoday ho chukha, phir karmkshethra mein jud jayen*"

(Heroes, the sun has risen, let us get back to work)

That was the poster put up at Keshavkunj, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh's (RSS) office in New Delhi, on June 4 after the P. K. Bahri Tribunal quashed the ban on the organisation. The poster suggests that the RSS had gone through a period of darkness—obviously a reference to the time since the Centre imposed a ban on it on December 10, 1992 after the demolition of the Babri

Masjid—when its workers could not dedicate themselves to service. But in reality the organisation's activities had not been affected at all. The only difference the ban made was that between December 11, 1992 and June 5, 1993 the saffron flag had been missing at its gatherings. "Otherwise we felt no problem at all. The activities that we were carrying on continued with the same vigour and strength as earlier," said an exuberant Bajrang Dal chief Vinay Katiyar, a hardcore RSS activist who is also the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Faizabad.

According to him, "the mother of all Sangh organisations" still coordinated the combine's activities and fought legal and organisational battles such as the grass-roots-level campaign against the Congress(I) in Madhya Pradesh and the propaganda against "Bangladeshi infiltrators" in Delhi. The campaigns and the meetings were disguised as picnics, gatherings of friends and sometimes held even under the auspices of non-existent voluntary organisations. The RSS had also conducted its usual training and *bodhana* (educational) camps without any hitch. In the six-month ban period, 685 camps were held across the country, 28 in Delhi itself. "We carried out our activities under the nose of the Central Government and nobody could stop us," said an RSS activist at Keshavkunj.

Apart from the periodic procedural camps, special camps to gear up the organisational structure were also held. At two such camps in Uttar Pradesh and M.P., a medium-term strategy to fight the Assembly elections was drawn up. Identification of problem areas at the panchayat-municipality level and formulation of general guidelines to bolster the combine's activities at these levels were the thrust of these efforts. Also, a major meeting was held in Maharashtra, after the February 25 rally debacle in New Delhi, to take stock of the factional feuds in the BJP. At this meeting L. K. Advani's name was cleared for the BJP presidency.

Though the RSS would want to portray its success in carrying on with its activities as an indicator of its strength, the fact remains that the haphazard manner in which the ban was imposed helped the organisation significantly. Although 3,808 workers of the RSS, 3,769 of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and 1,210 of the Bajrang Dal were arrested in the last six months, none was really stopped from working. According to RSS functionaries, most of those arrested were released within five days and the Government did not keep any tab on their activity after that. "It looked as though they (the Government) had no clue as to how to implement the ban order," said a senior worker.

According to him, police officers and officials had acted in an ad hoc manner without preparing legal and other documents to impose the ban and arrest the activists. In most cases no proper chargesheet was prepared. Even when the police went to arrest such important leaders as V. K. Saklecha, former Chief Minister of M.P., they did not have a proper chargesheet and the officers could not arrest the leader, who raised legal questions. Laloo



Singh, the BJP MLA from Ayodhya, was allowed to carry on with his organisational work, even after he announced publicly that he belonged to the RSS, on the plea that he was an elected representative.

The hallmark of the Government action on the ban front was ad hocism, right from the order which did not mention the RSS' long record of instigating communal hatred. The ban order, under Section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, confined itself to accusing the RSS of demolishing the Babri Masjid. But even this was not pursued properly.

The Government, which stated before the Bahri Tribunal that the only reason for the ban was the demolition of the masjid, could not name a single RSS worker who had participated in the act. Surely, it is not as if the Government could not find even one worker who was involved in the demolition. The fact is that it did not have the aptitude to work for justifying the ban.

The Bahri Tribunal, in its order quashing the ban, made an indirect reference to this lack of application when it pointed out that the Government's charges in its ban order are "just a reproduction of the provisions of Section 153(A) of the Indian Penal Code" (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony).

The Government was not able to substantiate that the RSS was the leader of the combine that included the VHP, the Bajrang Dal and the BJP. The Tribunal rejected the Government attempt to establish the link reasoning that this was a "new ground which has not been taken up in the notification and the same cannot be made basis for upholding the ban."

This haphazard approach enabled the RSS gain one legal victory after another against the Government. Just a week after the ban was imposed the Indore Bench of the M.P. High court ordered the unsealing of the State RSS office, saying the documents presented as the basis for sealing it were not foolproof. Then on February 15, the Allahabad High Court gave a similar order in respect of the RSS office there and on May 18, it stayed the ban on the RSS. The Bahri Tribunal's verdict came as a culmination of all these legal defeats suffered by the Government.

During the Tribunal's hearing it became clear the Government had not done any homework to present its case with strength. All through the Government fell into the RSS trap merely by replying to the queries posed by the RSS side. And most of these answers helped to build the RSS case against the ban.

Some of the admissions made by N. C. Padhi, Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau (communal), a major Government witness, included: 1. The RSS was devoted to the unity and integrity of the country; 2. No RSS worker has been convicted for an offence under Section 153(A); 3. The RSS is not opposed to Muslims nor has it ever

spread hatred against this community; 4. No book or brochure of the RSS has ever been forfeited for unlawful activities or for spreading communal hatred or any other offence similar to that; and 5. There would have been no ban on the organisation if the "disputed structure" at Ayodhya was not demolished on December 6.

In eliciting these admissions, the RSS side had focussed on selected documents and statements by its leaders. For instance, the entire thrust of the arguments on the unity and integrity question was whether the RSS had opposed Partition in 1947. The Government, instead of trying to list the activities of the organisation in the post-Independence period, simply admitted that the RSS had a stated position that the country should not have been divided. On the other issues also the RSS strategy was the same. It relied on a selective presentation and citation of documents to strengthen its case. As for the Government, it was clear there was no effort to dig deep and investigate properly and come out with proper rejoinders. The way Padhi's deposition went and the rest of the case was fought by the Government showed a total lack of application.

It was in this atmosphere of administrative bunglings and judicial censure of the Government that the RSS was able to carry on with its activities without any trouble. Now that the ban has been lifted what will be its new endeavours? No doubt, the first of the tasks would be to go to town on its victory in getting the ban lifted. The organisation also plans to have special meetings attended by national leaders all over the country. And with the return of the Ayodhya controversy on the national agenda, especially with Chandraswami's Som Yagna show, the Sangh leadership plans to concentrate there once again. The Sangh will be in full strength at Ayodhya when the *Hindutva* combine organises its counter yagna in July.

Another area of focus would be the legal front again. The organisation has two tasks. One, it wants to prevent the Government from going on appeal against the tribunal verdict, and, two, it wants to get the ban on the VHP, upheld by the Tribunal, revoked; the RSS plans to file a caveat in its own case and go on appeal in the VHP case. Otherwise it will just carry on with its activities that were never hindered during the ban period, or at least that is what the RSS leadership says.

#### **Ban Unimportant**

93AS0965D Madras FRONTLINE in English  
2 Jul 93 pp 12-14

[Article by Sharad Kumar: "Out of the Shadows"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The lifting of the ban on the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) by the P. K. Bahri Tribunal on June 4 has made little difference to the style of functioning of the most enigmatic, the most hated as well as the most ardently revered organisation of modern India.

The Tribunal's judgement was not exactly a surprise. The Allahabad High Court had earlier stayed the ban pending the Tribunal's verdict. In Karnataka too seals on the RSS "karyalaya," as its office is called, had been removed on court orders.

It took the administrative machinery in Nagpur four days after the ban was imposed to seal the national headquarters of the RSS in the congested old-city area of Mahal. The ban itself came four days after the Ayodhya demolition and after wide speculation in the press, giving enough time to the banned organisations to make contingency plans and chalk out the next line of command if the leaders were arrested.

Only 11 persons were arrested in Nagpur and they were later released on bail. The 77-year-old RSS sarsanghchalak, M.D. alias Balasaheb Deoras, was not one of them. Initial reports said he was under house arrest as the police picket at the RSS headquarters was strengthened and express permission from the Police Commissioner was needed to meet Deoras. Sudhakar Naik, Chief Minister of Maharashtra then, however, announced that the RSS supremo was a free man. He had instructed the police not to arrest Deoras, Naik told newsmen, because he was ailing and unable to move. It was pointed out that 'Z' level security, the highest, was already being given to Deoras.

Only four of the rooms in the three-storeyed building, reached through narrow, crowded lanes, were sealed as they were "record rooms," while others were being used as the residence of some full-timers. Adjacent to the Hedgewar Bhavan is the Apte Memorial Trust building named after the late S. S. Apte, the first general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, before which he was the chief editor of the news agency, Hindustan Samachar, both known RSS "sister concerns." And next to it is the premises of "Bharat Bharati," an organisation publishing children's books, another RSS "front." Both remained untouched. That explains how the RSS functioned during the five months and 25 days of the ban.

The "sealing" of the RSS headquarters on December 14 was more farcical and notional than real. Duly tipped off, the press was there in full strength hours before the police were. As newsmen waited, a usually reticent Deoras (who had gone to sleep immediately after being told of the ban announced over Doordarshan, leaving a one-line reaction with his aides for the pressmen who cared to contact them) was brought out and placed in a chair in the building's courtyard in front of the main gate through which he could see the ground where a "shakha" is held every evening. It was the ground where he himself started as a "swayamsevak" in 1926.

There, the frail, ailing, septuagenarian who controls perhaps the largest voluntary organisation in India, spoke at length to the press—about the illegality of the ban, on how the organisation emerged stronger every time it was banned and about his own failing health. When it was first banned in February 1948 following

Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, the RSS had only 200 branches. Now the "shakhas," the basic units through which the organisation functions, number over 35,000, with a total membership of over 20 lakh. The second ban was at the time of the 1975-77 Emergency, during which the largest number of detenus belonging to a single organisation, over 15,000, was from the RSS. The Emergency brought RSS men in contact with other non-Congress politicians who shared the jails with them. In jails too regular "boudhiks" (ideological discussions) and other RSS activities continued. It is claimed that "80 per cent of the underground resistance movement" during the Emergency, mainly by way of disseminating information, carrying messages and distributing of cyclo-styled underground newspapers, was run by RSS activists who had developed techniques of spreading a word—even a rumour—very fast and wide.

The drama of the sealing of the RSS premises enabled the organisation to get the maximum publicity. A journalist was heard asking one of the inmates during the operation if an emissary had come from New Delhi to inform them that the ban was being imposed only on paper to mollify critics in Muslim countries and assure the sarsanghchalak that no inconvenience would be caused to anyone.

And so it was. From the next day RSS "shakhas" (daily morning and evening gatherings where a saffron flag is hoisted, a highly patriotic prayer is recited and training in self-defence with lathis and dummy swords is imparted) were held regularly—without the saffron flag and the uniform of khaki shorts and white shirt.

That the ban was only on paper was obvious from reports that all RSS activities, including the highly-valued "OTC" (officers' training camp) and meetings, were being held as usual. Press releases were issued from the RSS head office during the ban.

On the day the ban was imposed on the RSS and its bank account frozen, insiders said most of its property and money were in the names of independent trusts and organisations unaffected by the ban. The RSS, whose huge revenue comes from sealed covers containing currency notes presented by swayamsewaks as "gurudakshina" at the annual foundation day parade coinciding with Vijayadashami, had only a paltry amount in the frozen account. No correct estimate of the wealth and assets of the RSS is available. An abortive attempt was made by an Income Tax officer to bring the organisation's finances into the open and collect tax on its income. The officer went into oblivion during Janata Dal rule.

Running the headquarters at Mahal and managing the sprawling building and grounds around Hedgewar's samadhi at Reshambagh, both in Nagpur, would cost, each day, much more than the meagre sum in the RSS account, as training camps and the activities of several of its front organisations are held at the Reshambagh premises. It is therefore obvious that the organisation

has its own secret sources of income. Over a thousand full-time "pracharaks" (motivators) are working in over 400 districts all over the country, spreading the RSS message, reporting developments to the headquarters and carrying out its orders. All this needs a lot of money, even with the spartan life its workers lead. And there seems to be no dearth of it.

The much-publicised creation of a "Sree Ram Sewak Sangh" to beat the ban appears to be only a ploy and the new organisation had hardly been in evidence. However, several other organisations like the Janadhikar Samiti, the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti and the Durga Vahini for women and girls, the Rashtriya Sikh Sangat for Sikhs, the Samarasata Manch for Dalits, the Yuvak Shaurya Shibir and Yuvathi Shaurya Shibir (training camps for young men and women), the Deendayal Research Institute, Bal Jagat and several "keertan sammelans" because very active, spreading the RSS viewpoint.

These organisations are in addition to the already known members of the "Sangh Parivar," a term that gained currency during the last one year, along with "Hindutva."

These include its political wing, the Bharatiya Janata Party; the student wing, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad; the Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram which launched scores of welfare organisations for tribals with the aim of curbing their conversion to other religions; the Sahkar Bharati to promote cooperatives; the Sewa Bharati for relief work; the labour wing, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, which has hundreds of unions and federations affiliated to it; the Vidya Bharati and Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the primary and nursery schools trying to stem the craze for "convent" schools.

None of these organisations was affected by the ban on the RSS. They all have RSS workers holding the reins at various levels. There are several other organisations like education societies, cooperative banks and organisations of lawyers, teachers or librarians, which have been "captured" by RSS activists and run under the guidance of their headquarters. Some of them are not even known as RSS-linked bodies.

This is the organisation which a 35-year-old Maharashtrian doctor of Telugu origin started in 1925 with a camp at Amaravati. Now it has grown like a giant banyan tree with its hidden roots spread far and deep and with a wide canopy.

"Dr. Hedgewar founded the organisation and nursed it as a seedling. The second chief, 'Guruji' Golwalkar, gave it an ideological coherence and goal and brought together scores of Hindu religious leaders with their own following, diverse practices and, of course, egos. And his successor, Balasaheb, has seen to it that the banyan tree struck roots and spread its branches far and wide—even abroad," says Ramakrishna Deo, 63, who lives at the RSS headquarters.

Dinkar Buche, the caretaker of Hedgewar Bhavan, asserts that despite his ill-health, Balasaheb is mentally alert and strong enough to run the organisation. Though he describes as sheer nonsense rumours of a secret communications network at the RSS headquarters, it has to be accepted that running such a far-flung organisation needs a perfect system of communications.

And the ban has been lifted. The RSS has come out of the shadows.

The RSS observed June 13 as "victory day" with meetings and processions. For the first time, the organisation, which avoids ostentation, had put up giant cut-outs of Golwalkar in Nagpur.

But the spotlight on it has not illuminated the mysterious inner labyrinths of the secretive, militant Hindu organisation and its power structure which controls scores of organised, committed groups. As a senior RSS man and vice-president of the BJP, K. R. Malkani, is fond of saying, twisting the Churchillian phrase, it remains "an enigma wrapped in mystery."

#### Leadership Succession Important

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2 Jul 93 pp 14-15

[Article by Sharad Kumar: "The Top Secret"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The one subject which no senior RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] activist is ready to talk about is: who will succeed M. D. Deoras as sarsanghchalak? Or its corollaries: Will a South Indian, for the first time, head the RSS whose base is predominantly upper-middle class, "upper caste," Maharashtrian? Will he, like the last Guru of the Sikhs, declare that there would be no more sarsanghchalaks and that the organisation, which controls scores of institutions all over the country, would be run by an elected executive?

The question of Deoras' successor crops up often among RSS-watchers but never among its activists ("We never discuss this issue," says Dinkar Buche, caretaker of the RSS headquarters in Nagpur) as Deoras, "Balasaheb" to his followers, has been ailing for quite some time. He had had a prostrate operation, is suffering from the after-effects of a mild paralytic stroke, has acute diabetes requiring injection of insulin twice a day and was recently hospitalised in Bombay with respiratory problems.

And yet the 77-year-old RSS supremo appears to have a firm grip not only on the organisation, which claims to be a socio-religious group, but also on its political wing, the BJP, the only political party at the national level which had taken giant strides in the post-Emergency era. So much so that "Nagpur clearance" is said to be obtained for every major move of the party and for the choice of its senior office-bearers.



The post of sarsanghchalak, like that of the Pope or the Shankaracharya, is held for life, with the outgoing chief naming his successor before death creates a vacancy.

Deoras, on the eve of whose last birthday a ban was imposed on the organisation, following the Ayodhya incidents, took over as RSS supremo on June 5, 1973 when M. S. ("Guruji") Golwalkar passed away. Significantly, it was on the eve of the 20th anniversary of his "accession" to the post that the ban was lifted. Guruji was the general secretary ("sarkaryawah") of the RSS when its founder-president, K. B. Hedgewar, died in 1940. Deoras was the general secretary when Golwalkar breathed his last. In sharp contrast to the dazzlingly brilliant "Guruji," Deoras maintains a low profile; silent but with exceptional organisational talent.

So, logically, the mantle should fall on the present general secretary, H. V. Seshadri. Lakshmanrao Joshi, editor of the organisation's Marathi daily *Tarun Bharat*, admits the general secretary does have a bright chance of being nominated to the top post, but adds that it was, however, not compulsory that he alone should be named.

Despite all the claims of a non-parochial outlook, the RSS is dominated by "upper caste" Maharashtrians and a majority of its members too belong to the same group. Hence the first list of people to choose the successor from would naturally comprise Dr. Abasaheb Thatte, the all-India chief of the "pracharak" wing; Moropant Pingle, who looks after the RSS publications and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad; and Dattopant Thengadi, chief of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, who also looks after the farmers' organisation connected with the RSS.

Though Thatte and Pingle are senior leaders and part of the core group running the organisation, their advanced age and failing health may come in the way of their being nominated. If a Maharashtrian alone is to be chosen, Thengadi, who had done commendable work on the labour and kisan fronts and had had parliamentary experience as well, appears to be the obvious choice.

A simple, almost self-effacing man with excellent organisational abilities, Thengadi, who speaks good Malayalam besides several other languages, had made his presence felt in Parliament whenever labour-related issues were discussed.

Besides Bangalore-based H. V. Seshadri, another South Indian, K. S. Sudarshan the "bauddhik pramukh" (chief of the intellectual and ideological cell), could be in the race for leadership, though RSS activists hate the very concept of such a "race." However unlikely having a southerner as the RSS chief may sound, it is not impossible. K. B. Hedgewar, the founder, and Deoras were both from families which had migrated to Maharashtra from Andhra. (Any Maharashtrian surname ending with 'war' indicates this. In Andhra the surnames are not written in full. They migrated to Maharashtra perhaps during some famine in search of livelihood and when asked for surname, the Telugu people added a "waru" to

it—meaning "belonging to." This Kannam became Kannamwar, Sunkara became Sunkarwar. "Devaraju" could be the original surname of Deoras' family).

Prof. Rajendra Singh (popularly known as Rajju Bhayya) from Uttar Pradesh, a joint secretary who has been looking after the "foreign affairs" and units abroad, could have been in that list, but had ruled himself out because of indifferent health.

Only one man can lay the speculations to rest—Deoras himself. And rarely does he reveal his mind.

### Lifting of Ban Improper

93AS0965F Madras FRONTLINE in English  
2 Jul 93 pp 15-16

[Article by A. G. Noorani: "RSS Unbanned: A Disquieting Decision"]

[Text] There is something inherently wrong in this: a person who considers the Ram Janmabhoomi movement a "laudable" one and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) a body which actually pursues "laudable objects" being asked to preside over a Tribunal which is to try the VHP and its sister concerns, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) and the Bajrang Dal, for fomenting communal ill-will and for participating in the demolition of the Babri Masjid. It is, of course, open to a private citizen to hold such views. But, surely, a High Court judge who holds views such as these reveals, in Walter Lippmann's celebrated phrase, a "public philosophy" which disqualifies him from serving on any tribunal which tries any communal body, Hindu or Muslim.

But these are precisely the words used by Justice P. K. Bahri of the Delhi High Court in his capacity as a Tribunal appointed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 to decide whether there was "sufficient cause" for the notifications of December 10, 1992 banning the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal, under the Act. On June 4, 1993, Justice Bahri upheld the ban on the VHP but quashed the ones against the RSS and the Bajrang Dal.

His judgement runs into 340 pages and must be considered carefully when the full text is made available, for the extracts quoted in responsible dailies give cause for disquiet.

Sample these. The judge said, "By itself the Ram Janmabhoomi movement could be termed as laudable as far as Hindus are concerned and if the movement had been carried out within the permissible legal parameters peacefully, there could arise no occasion for imposing a ban on any association spearheading such a movement."

The qualification regarding "legal parameters" does not obscure his approval of the movement itself. Consider his comments on one of the bodies "spearheading such a movement," the VHP. Even while upholding the ban on it, Justice Bahri could not resist delivering this pathetic but revealing lament: "It is really painful that with this

ban which is to continue for a statutory period (of two years) even the laudable objectives being pursued by the VHP would stand disrupted for some period (emphasis added throughout)."

He added his fervent plea: "I hope that if things get calm and the leaders of VHP realise their responsibility that no such inflammatory and provocative speeches are to be made... the Central Government may *suo motu* examine the question of lifting the ban as early as possible." No doubt to pursue its "laudable objectives."

Was the Tribunal, indeed, as naive as these words suggest? For, even from the speeches it cited, the VHP can no more desist from inflammatory speeches than abandon its objectives. That "the objectives being pursued by the VHP" are "laudable" is an assessment none outside the ranks of the Sangh *parivar* has yet expressed and one no secularist can possibly share. If Justice Bahri holds that view he ought not to have sat on the Tribunal at all. It matters little that he considered its leaders' speeches to be bad. He said: "The material and evidence do show that the Ram Janmabhoomi movement being aggressively pursued by the VHP and inflammatory speeches being made from the platforms of the VHP and Press releases and leaflets being issued by the leaders of the VHP, did promote the feeling of enmity and ill-will towards the Muslims generally and thus, it has to be held that there is sufficient cause for declaring the VHP as an unlawful organisation." The fact remains that he considers the objectives to be "laudable."

Related to the assessment of the VHP is his ruling that since the Government's plea that the three bodies, the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal, are inter-linked was not made in the notifications banning them, but in a resume filed by it before the Tribunal, he could not consider the plea. He declined to consider even the Bajrang Dal's reply to the show-cause notice issued by the Tribunal on this point.

This is a gross error on his part. Five notifications were made under the Act simultaneously on December 10, 1992. Of them, two relating to the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Islamic Sewak Sangh were referred to Justice P. N. Nag of the Delhi High Court. The three relating to the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal were all referred to one and the same judge, Justice Bahri. The one concerning the VHP cited speeches by V. H. Dalmia, Ahok Singh, Giriraj Kishore and Vijaya Raje Scindia and cited two grounds: 1. "encouraging and aiding its followers to promote or attempt to promote on grounds of religion, disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different communities" and 2. participation in the demolition of the mosque by the followers of the VHP.

The notification against the RSS cited both these grounds plus one more: namely, an imputation that members of certain communities cannot "be considered nationals of India," thereby causing communal disharmony. No specific speeches were cited. Likewise, the

notification against the Bajrang Dal cited the two grounds mentioned in the VHP's case, plus one more: namely, training members to use criminal force against other communities.

The identical wording of the two common grounds against all the three bodies made in the notifications issued the same day shows that they were linked ideologically and in the crime of December 6, 1992. The organisations themselves shared the same perception. Justice Bahri cannot rule out the plea of mutual association because "no such ground has been raised in the notification." Linkage is not a ground under the Act but a piece of evidence in support of the two identical grounds. The Supreme Court has distinguished between "grounds" and "particulars."

Section 3(2) of the Act requires the Government to "specify the grounds on which it is issued and such other particulars as the Central Government may consider necessary." It cited the "particulars" only in one notification—the speeches by the VHP leaders.

It is for the Tribunal to issue a show-cause notice to the banned bodies, consider their replies and "hold an inquiry" in the matter as Section 4(4) enjoins. It can call for "such further information as it may consider necessary from the Central Government" or the banned bodies "as it may consider necessary." It is empowered to take oral evidence. What if the evidence discloses linkage? Will that not prove the grounds by revealing unity in thought and action?

As for the linkage, a careful study by Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle entitled *The Brotherhood in Saffron* records: "The divisions within the Hindu ecclesiastical community and its lack of unified purpose, according to RSS analysts, have hampered the effort to create a unified Hindu society. Golwalkar, with this concern in mind, invited a select group of religious leaders to Bombay in late August 1964, to discuss ways in which the various Hindu sects and movements could work more closely with each other. At that meeting, the delegates established the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP); and Shivram Shankar Apte, an RSS pracharak, was elected its general secretary. The delegates specified three objectives for the new organisation: 1. to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; 2. to protect and spread Hindu values, ethical and spiritual, and to make them relevant in contemporary society; and 3. to establish and strengthen the links among Hindus living in different countries.

"While the VHP has had only limited success in uniting the various Hindu religious organisations, and almost none in establishing a common doctrinal corpus; it does give the RSS an opportunity to identify itself with the Hindu ecclesiastical community, thus enabling the RSS to lobby for its views among a larger audience." The VHP was an arm of the RSS. On April 8, 1984 the VHP gave a call for removal of all the three mosques—at

Ayodhya, Varanasi and Mathura. This is the Ram Janmabhoomi movement—anything but a “laudable” movement by a body with “laudable” objectives.

Finally, the Judge also referred to some photographs which showed a rehearsal being conducted for climbing the mound where the disputed structure stood. He remarked that the photo by itself did not show that the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal were associated with these “kar sevaks” or people who were participating in the rehearsal. “If such evidence was available to the Central Government before December 6, it is not understandable as to why all-out efforts were not made for protecting the disputed structure by the Central Government itself.”

“It appears that it was not in contemplation of either the leaders of the three organisations or the authorities that harm would be caused to the disputed structure during the kar seva permitted by the Supreme Court on December 6,” he further observed. This is an added cause for disquiet at the judgement. For though he criticises the Government for not producing the video in evidence he gives a certificate all the same: “In case the same had been produced, it might have shown that some sincere efforts were made by the leaders present on the dais on that day, requesting such kar sevaks not to cause damage to the disputed structure at all.”

#### Secretive Election of Leader

93AS0965G *Calcutta SUNDAY in English*  
19 Jun 93 p 31

[Article by Ketan Narottam Tanna: “After Deoras, Who?”; italicized words as published]

[Text]

#### Three Sealed Envelopes Contain the Name of the Next RSS Chief

Three closely-guarded, sealed envelopes lie with three different persons at the RSS headquarters in Nagpur, Maharashtra. They will be opened only when the ailing RSS chief, Balasaheb Deoras, breathes his last. The identities of the persons who have the envelopes is also not known, except for Abaji Thatte, the RSS’ all-India *prachar pramukh* (publicity chief).

The envelopes are believed to contain the name of the person who will succeed Deoras as the RSS supremo. And the only one to know the successor’s name is Deoras himself.

The mystery behind the envelopes is indicative of the way the RSS functions. The chief or the *sarsanghchalak* is vested with absolute powers to nominate his successor and he is under no obligation to reveal the name of his nominee in advance.

K. B. Hedgewar, the founder of the RSS, had nominated his successor, M. S. Golwalkar, a day before he died in 1940. Similarly, Golwalkar had kept everybody guessing

about his successor. After his death in 1973, a sealed envelope was opened containing the name of Madhukar Dattatraya alias Balasaheb Deoras.

But now that Balasaheb Deoras is ill, and it has become known that his successor’s name is contained in three envelopes, speculation is rife about who comes after him.

Five senior RSS men are in the race. They are general secretary H. V. Seshadri, joint general secretaries Rajinder Singh and K. S. Sundershan, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh founder Dattopant Thengdi and Moropant Pingle, a senior *pracharak*, who also heads the RSS project on the rewriting of Indian history books.

Of them, only Thengdi and Pingle are Chitpawan Brahmins. And this sub-sect has traditionally dominated the RSS. But Pingle doesn’t keep well, and the gossip is that Thengdi is not too keen on the job.

But one thing is certain. Whatever may be the differences within the RSS family, there is little chance of a power struggle for the post of *sarsanghchalak*.

#### In Fighting Mood

93AS0965H *Calcutta SUNDAY in English*  
19 Jun 93 pp 27-29

[Article by Minu Jain: “Quashing the Ban”; italicized words as published]

[Text]

#### A Tribunal Strikes Down the Government’s Order Declaring the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] and the Bajrang Dal Unlawful Organisations

It’s a judicial verdict that’s bound to have far-reaching political consequences. On 4 June, the one-judge tribunal, constituted under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, struck down the central government’s ban on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bajrang Dal even while upholding the restrictions imposed on the other constituent of the *sang parivar*, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). The little ground that the Narasimha Rao regime had gained by banning the *sang parivar* following the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the riots that broke out in its wake, suddenly seemed to have been lost. And Justice P. K. Bahri’s ruling could be just the opportunity that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was looking for to stage a comeback.

But that’s for the future. For the moment, it’s celebration time for the RSS. As soon as the tribunal’s verdict became public on the afternoon of 4 June, hundreds of slogan-shouting RSS cadres gathered outside the organisation’s Delhi headquarters at Keshav Kunj. They burst crackers, danced on the streets and even offered sweets to passers-by. The scene was more or less the same in all the RSS offices throughout the country.

The atmosphere inside the RSS office at Keshav Kunj reflected the frenzy outside. Sitting under a banner



which proclaimed, "*Bharat Hindu Rashtra Hai*," the general secretary of the organisation, H. V. Sheshadri, declared triumphantly, "This is a tremendous morale booster for us even though we are anguished that the ban on the VHP has not been lifted."

The RSS is clearly in a fighting mood and has been chalked out a strategy to capitalise on the tribunal's verdict in its favour. It has been decided that 13 June will be observed as "*Hindu Chetna Divas*." On that day, the RSS will hold rallies and demonstrations all over the country. And, a central working committee meeting of the organisation on 22-23 June in Nagpur will decide on the future plan of action.

All this is aimed at revitalising the organisation, whose activities were somewhat hampered due to the ban. Sheshadri explained: "The situation is now most propitious for the *swayamsevak*s to plunge into the urgent task of not only restarting all the suspended *shakhas*, but also expanding its network particularly in the rural, backward and tribal areas. The lakhs of Hindus who have been drawn into the Hindu *jagran* movement over the last few years need to be inducted into the character-moulding process of the *shakha*."

Balasaheb Deoras, the ailing chief of the RSS, sent his message from Nagpur: "The RSS will now resume its mission of building national character among the people which alone will be able to put the country back on the rails of national unity and national self respect."

Even the VHP, which had no real cause to celebrate, maintained an aggressive stance. "I hereby call upon all persons devoted to the Hindu cause to go ahead with the task of mobilising and organising public opinion through every available democratic and legitimate forum," Vishnu Hari Dalmia, the VHP president, reacted to the tribunal's verdict. The message was clear: the RSS, as head of the *sangh parivar*, had been given a "clean chit" by the courts and they were determined to make the most of it.

Of course, it's not that the RSS leaders had gone into hiding following the ban. In fact, the organisation had been carrying on its activities despite the restrictions. "Over the years, the RSS has grown into a *parivar*. So, the ban, in a sense, was ineffective. One door had closed but many others had remained open," said an RSS member.

But it's not the RSS or the Bajrang Dal that's worrying the Centre. The Rao regime's immediate concern is the BJP and the political mileage the party is likely to gain from the tribunal's verdict. For, now that the court has ruled that the government was not justified in banning the RSS, ruling party members fear that the BJP, too, is certainly going to raise the demand for reinstating its four state governments which were dismissed following the Ayodhya outrage.

BJP leaders argue that three of its governments in Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan were

dismissed on the grounds that their chief ministers belonged to the banned RSS. But now that the tribunal has struck down the restrictions on the RSS, isn't it logical that the chief ministers too should be given back their jobs? The case of Uttar Pradesh, however, is different. Kalyan Singh was dismissed by the Centre not for any RSS links, but because his regime had failed to protect the Babri Masjid on 6 December last year.

Of course, before the recent judgement in favour of the RSS, the BJP had received a shot in its arm when the Jabalpur Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court said that the imposition of President's Rule in the state last December was illegal.

Sources in the BJP say that the party will now certainly pursue the court cases filed by the former chief ministers of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh with renewed vigour.

The only good news for the Congress is that Justice Bahri has upheld the ban on the VHP. But then, the organisation is planning to petition the Supreme Court against the tribunal's verdict. Moreover, as Vishnu Hari Dalmia explained, the VHP is not too upset with the ruling because the ban of the RSS, which leads the *sangh parivar*, has been struck down.

So, another round of the battle has just begun. While the Rao regime is contemplating petitioning the Supreme Court, the RSS and its allies are gearing up to go to the people. What this means for the country is anybody's guess.

### Reversal of Ban Shortsighted

93AS09651 Calcutta SUNDAY in English  
19 Jun 93 pp 28-29

[Article: "Bad Homework"]

[Text]

### Why the Tribunal Quashed the Ban on the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] and the Bajrang Dal

Had the government slipped up? Or did the judiciary take a lenient view of a serious issue? These questions were being asked repeatedly as the single-judge tribunal, constituted under the Unlawful Activities (prevention) Act, struck down the ban on the RSS and the Bajrang Dal but, curiously, upheld the Centre's decision on the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad].

As soon as Justice P. K. Bahri delivered his verdict, legal experts and party officials poured over the voluminous 340-page judgement, trying to figure out why the judge came to such a conclusion. It then became clear that while the Centre had certainly failed to adequately substantiate its charges against the two Hindu outfits, Justice Bahri, too, had perhaps taken a lenient view.

"It is not established that the Bajrang Dal had planned the demolition of the disputed structure (Babri Masjid).

Maybe, there is a moral responsibility of the banned associations also for the demolition of the disputed structure but that is not a legal ground for imposing the ban," Justice Bahri ruled.

Regarding the ban on the RSS, the judge felt that the Centre didn't have sufficient reasons to impose restrictions on the activities of the organisation. The RSS cannot be banned simply because it was associated with the VHP and the Bajrang Dal, Justice Bahri reasoned.

While dealing with the ban on the VHP, however, the judge said that the material and the evidence provided by the government show that the organisation "did promote the feelings of enmity and ill-will towards the Muslims and thus, it has to be held that there is sufficient cause for declaring the VHP as an unlawful organisation."

According to a High Court lawyer, the Centre didn't take much care while framing the notifications imposing ban on the three organisations. While the one relating to the VHP mentions "incendiary statements" made by five leaders—including Acharya Giriraj Kishore, Ashok Singh and Sadhvi Rithambara—the other do not.

Moreover, while arguing in favour of the ban, the central government in the last five month had laid a lot of stress on the relationship between the three organisations. The judge felt that this was something new and that the notification did not mention this point at all.

But despite the adverse judgement, government counsel R. K. Anand is not too upset with the verdict. "Even though it has struck down the ban, the judgement has actually indicated the RSS/Bajrang Dal on many counts," Anand reasoned.

For instance, though the RSS-VHP-Bajrang Dal combine argued that it was not responsible for the post-demolition riots and that it was actually Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's speech on 6 December last year in which he had continually referred to the demolition of the mosque that had incited the Muslims, the judge felt otherwise. He said in his judgement that such an argument "could not be countenanced" and communal tension had heightened during the entire Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

Justice Bahri also censored all the three organisations for bringing out provocative pamphlets, audio cassettes and the like. And though the counsel for the RSS-VHP-Bajrang Dal asked the judge not to take these as evidence against his clients, Justice Bahri ruled that the three outfits just couldn't wash its hands of the matter.

What now? Though Ram Phal Bhansal, the RSS counsel, felt that the tribunal's verdict was "the last word," and that "the chapter was now closed," the Centre is planning to go to the Supreme Court against the judgement. So is the VHP. But since there is no precedent for an appeal against the verdict of a tribunal constituted under

the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, it remains to be seen whether the apex court will admit such an appeal.

For the moment, of course, the Centre is clearly on the defensive.

### **Congress (I) Will Suffer**

93AS0965J *Calcutta SUNDAY in English*  
19 Jun 93 pp 30-31

[Article by Nirmal Mitra: "Wrong Moves"]

[Text]

### **The Congress May Have To Pay Dearly for Dismissing Four BJP-Ruled State Governments and Banning Communal Organisations**

Closeted in a room in Parliament House with journalists 48 hours after the demolition of the Babri Masjid, the Prime Minister's political adviser, Jitendra Prasad, seemed hardly apologetic about the government adopting a soft line towards Hindu militant organisations. Answering a question on whether communal outfits were going to be banned, he mused: "There are positive and negative aspects of such a step and we will have to consider them all." When the ban was finally imposed on 10 December, it was derided as a half-hearted move, taken under pressure from a rebellious Arjun Singh.

Now that the Justice P. K. Bahri tribunal has struck down the ban on two of the organisations proscribed—the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bajrang Dal—Rao and his supporters can claim to have been vindicated (see preceding story). The verdict has proved Arjun Singh wrong in demanding drastic action against the Hindu organisations. As Rao loyalists are fond of saying, it is better to be realistic about combating the Hindu challenge than succumbing to emotions.

According to a close confidant of the Prime Minister, the quashing of the ban had hardly shocked Rao. "He could see it coming, and he always knew there was nothing he could do about it," he revealed, adding that Rao was a patient man who heard out all views before taking a decision. The Prime Minister was not given to hasty moves, but under pressure from persons like M. L. Fotedar, C. K. Jaffer Sharief, Kalpnath Rai and indirect pressure from Arjun Singh—who didn't speak out—the Prime Minister was forced into making two mistakes. The first was the dismissal of the three Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled state governments of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. The second was the banning of communal organisations.

Both these decisions landed the Centre in trouble. First, the Jabalpur Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court declared the promulgation of President's Rule in Madhya Pradesh as unconstitutional. Even the Opposition parties had criticised it. And now, the P. K. Bahri tribunal found no case for continuing the ban on the RSS

and the Bajrang Dal, even as it upheld the government's decision on the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP] and the Islamic Sevak Sangh.

But several Rao loyalists in the Congress are intrigued at how "rabid" organisations like the Bajrang Dal and the Shiv Sena could be let off. They can understand why the RSS was spared. After all, it wasn't exactly involved in the demolition of the Babri Masjid because it didn't send any delegation of *kar sevaks* to Ayodhya. But members of the VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena were at the forefront of the operation.

Of course, the Prime Minister never thought that banning the RSS and other organisations would be of any use, they say. The ban was never effective. Members of the VHP and Bajrang Dal did not find it difficult to carry on their meetings under banners like those of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh or the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh.

It follows then that the rejection of the ban on the RSS and the Bajrang Dal would not harm the Congress' prospects any more than it had helped it in the first place, Rao's supporters argue.

But that is now how the Arjun Singh camp views it. It says that the PM is only looking for a scapegoat, someone he could blame for taking the decision to dismiss the three BJP-run governments and impose a ban on communal organisations. The four-day delay in imposing the ban was meant to show that Rao was doing it under pressure from Arjun Singh. Rao's critics claim that they wouldn't be surprised if the central government reinstated the BJP governments in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.

At any rate, the government did a poor job of arguing its case for dismissal of the BJP governments and imposing the ban, Rao's critics say. The government's affidavit before the Jabalpur Bench, for instance, was inadequately documented.

Evidently, the law ministry had not done its homework. In the case of the ban on communal organisations, too, the Centre's resumes were of a poor quality.

As for the debate over whether the communal outfits should have been banned or not, Arjun Singh's supporters point out that even such Rao faithfuls as V. C. Shukla, Rajesh Pilot and Jitendra Prasad were in favour of the ban. "There was hardly anyone against the move in the aftermath of 6 December," a senior Congressman said. "It was unfair to blame Rao's mistakes on Arjun Singh," he argued.

Particularly, when the Prime Minister had never heeded Arjun Singh's early warnings about what was going to happen at Ayodhya. Apparently, after Arjun Singh got back from an independent visit to Lucknow on 4 December last year, he had met Rao and forewarned him about the possibility of the Babri Masjid being destroyed.

Except for Ghulam Nabi Azad and Jaffer Sharief, the Muslim ministers and MPs played a double role, Arjun Singh's supporters say. "Ahmed Patel would side with the secularists in the morning and the pro-PM gang in the evening," said a Rao critic. "And ministers like Salman Khurshid were desperately trying to tell outraged Muslims that Rao was the only hope they had."

According to a Cabinet minister, the PM is convinced of the infallibility of his "salvage-the-Hindu-vote" strategy. If the Congress is to survive, it will have to recognise the wave of Hindu revivalism that is sweeping the country and not leave the BJP and its cohorts to pick up all the fruits from it. "The Congress will have to build the temple in Ayodhya, come what may. Equally, it will have to convince the Muslims that the survival of the Congress is their only hope of survival," the minister said. Which is Rao's classic justification for his paradoxical strategy—only by supporting the Congress' efforts to win over part of the Hindu vote can be minorities ensure their own survival.

#### **New Political Movement in Sikkim Based on Racial Differences**

93AS0972A Madras FRONTLINE in English  
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[Article by V. Sridar and Kalyan Chaudhuri: "New Force in Sikkim"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The political atmosphere in Sikkim has heated up considerably. Surprising, for two reasons. One, elections are not just round the corner; and two, Chief Minister Nar Bahadur Bhandari's Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP) won a landslide victory in the 1989 elections, capturing all the 32 Assembly seats.

But the applecart has been upset with the formation of the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) in March 1993 by Pawan Kumar Chamling. A serious political rival to the strongman seems to have finally arrived after 14 years (Nar Bahadur Bhandari's tenure as Chief Minister is the second longest, the record being held by Jyoti Basu).

A former member of Bhandari's Cabinet, Chamling is now on a Statewide campaign against the Chief Minister. Though elections are due only in late 1994, the scorching pace of the campaign—30 meetings across Sikkim in the past one month—and the seriousness with which Bhandari seems to be responding to the issues raised by Chamling, have heightened the political tension. Chamling's main constituency is among the backward castes in the Nepali community (Nepalese account for about three-fourths of the State's population).

Chamling's popularity, particularly among the youth, is apparent, though it is not clear whether he will be able to sustain the momentum he has attained in the last two months. Even his political opponents admit that his skills as a political organiser are helping him draw huge crowds. At a meeting at Nadugaon village in south Sikkim, said to be his stronghold, the youth were present



in large numbers. Chamling himself admits that the youth, particularly the educated and unemployed, are restive and behind him. The reasons are not difficult to understand.

Bhandari's governments have done little for industrial investment in the State. Neither has the Central Government taken any initiative in this regard. Most of the industries are small with localised markets. In short, employment opportunities have dwindled. Bhandari has admitted that "there are disgruntled elements" and that "jobs are limited." He has also accepted that the "educated unemployed are not happy with the Government."

However, he goes along with the Centre's new economic dispensation, as is evident in his efforts to privatise even the limited industrial investment undertaken by the State. Chamling, Industries Minister till he was thrown out in June 1992, said: "In other States and countries sick industries are privatised, but in Sikkim, viable and healthy industries are being privatised." And, to emphasise the complete control Bhandari has over his Cabinet, Chamling said he was a Minister "only in a purely formal sense." Bhandari would "send the files to me after taking the decisions."

While the number of schools has increased sharply over the years, observers say the quality of education has been badly neglected. This, according to them, was caused by the large-scale recruitment of unqualified teachers—often to suit the interests of the SSP's boss men. Surjay Pradhan, a primary school teacher working in the Dzongu hill range (an area reserved for the Lepcha community), says the youth are thoroughly disillusioned. "The situation is ideal for any sort of divisive movement to take root in Sikkim. There is only one college and even this can accommodate only 1,000 students. The unemployed youth are in danger of being hijacked by divisive, particularly communal, propaganda. This already seems to be happening with politicians competing to appease the Nepali community."

Chamling's main plank is the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations on seat reservations for the backward castes. Though he says his campaign is aimed at mobilising all Sikkimese, his critics, including Bhandari, argue that it is communal. They contend that his slogans are divisive and that he is instigating the Nepalese of "Mongoloid stock" to revolt against the upper castes among the Nepalese in Sikkim. Bhandari says Chamling is "hobnobbing with Subash Ghising and instigating the Other Backward Classes (OBC)." However, asked why he signed a resolution moved in the State Assembly against the Mandal Commission recommendations, he said: "I had to keep quiet. I was on the treasury benches." Chamling, however, contends that his campaign is to liberate the Sikkimese from the clutches of Bhandari "the dictator." There are also indications that the Opposition parties may come together on one platform to fight Bhandari.

On May 16, speaking at the official function to mark the 18th anniversary of Sikkim's accession to the Indian Union, Bhandari said: "I welcome the formation of a new political party in Sikkim because anti-Bhandari votes would get split." A day earlier, he told FRONTLINE: "Soon there will be another regional political party." Asked about this party, Chamling said Bhandari was planning to encourage the formation of a new political party to divide the Opposition.

On May 16, Bhandari was acting like an elder statesman, dwelling at length on the subject of national unity and the gains that have accrued to the Sikkimese people on their joining the Indian Union. He told FRONTLINE that Sikkim, being a border State, had a very good record of public amity and peace, unlike many other States. "My party is committed to national integration and communal harmony. The people of Sikkim and the Government of India should congratulate me on keeping peace here—amidst all the trouble in Darjeeling." Bhandari does not miss a chance to hit out at the Subash Ghising, president of the Gorkha National Liberation Front, and laments that the West Bengal Chief Minister has been soft on Ghising. "Jyoti Basu was not strong enough on Ghising."

Commenting on the SDF, Bhandari said: "Chamling's party is attracting criminals. There is a larger conspiracy at work... An attempt is on to mobilise the Mongoloid Nepalese in eastern Nepal, Darjeeling, Sikkim and south Bhutan under a single umbrella. This is dangerous."

This tone, suggesting that Bhandari is an ardent defender of national unity and communal harmony, is in sharp contrast to his own utterances as the boss of the SSP. In his five-hour-long harangue at the ninth anniversary of the party's founding, on May 24, he charged the Centre with plotting to overthrow him, using the services of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB). He alleged that the Centre was aiding his political opponents. He drew a round of applause when he reminded the audience that if the people had supported him when he opposed the State's merger, "there would have been no merger and no rape of Sikkim."

Bhandari's speech was punctuated with sarcastic references to several Opposition leaders, including Kazi Lhendup Dorji, B.B. Gurung and Chamling. Bhandari also did not fail to mention the fact that after his dismissal in 1984, the newly-formed SSP under his leadership was swept to power, winning 30 of the 21 seats in the Assembly.

On March 23, while addressing the Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association, an organisation close to the SSP, Bhandari said: "People were asked to choose between the Chogyal and Kazi Lhendup Dorji, but in reality it was an election (to decide) whether Sikkim will remain a sovereign country or will merge with India as a province. People were forced to cast the vote under the supervision of the Central Reserve Police Force [CRPF] of India.

How could a country like India, which was supposed to be a member of the Non-aligned Movement, perpetuate the reign of terror against a tiny neighbouring kingdom? This is my question to the Indian Government."

Political analysts say Bhandari has, throughout his political career, skilfully balanced the two facets of his style. When he needs popular support, the SSP leader tends to use the latent discontent over the manner in which Sikkim was merged in the Indian Union. This explains the provocative statements against the Centre (he referred to it as "Hindustan Sarkar" in his May 24 speech). His charisma and his skill as an orator and the fact that he openly voices the latent sentiments about the merger, endear him to the audience.

Kazi Lhendup Dorji, Sikkim's first Chief Minister, speaking to FRONTLINE at his residence in Kalimpong, said Bhandari had the habit of raising separatist slogans whenever he was in trouble.

However, this is balanced with a pragmatic approach to the task of actually governing a sensitive border State. He has made his peace with the Centre. Moreover, he understands that the Congress(I) poses no danger to him as a political force in the State. (The State's Seva Dal chief admitted that the involvement of top Congress(I) leaders in the Tripura lottery scandal has hurt the party.) Observers say Bhandari realises that Sikkim being a sensitive border State, he cannot rule by sheer brinkmanship all the time.

Apart from the new political threat, two developments have cast a shadow over Bhandari's fortunes. The first was a Union Home Ministry decision on April 17 to terminate the services of K. Pradhan, the Chief Secretary who is believed to be Bhandari's right-hand man, on corruption charges. In 1986, he was asked to seek voluntary retirement, but this was stayed by the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT). Pradhan has now appealed to the CAT seeking a stay on the termination. In fact, Bhandari spoke openly in support of him at the May 16 function.

The second development was Kazi Lhendup Dorji's petition in the Supreme Court, concerning corruption charges against Bhandari, which came up for hearing on May 5. In May 1984, when Bhandari was a Congress(I) Chief Minister, the party high command chose to replace him with B.B. Gurung. Gurung, during his 13-day tenure, accorded sanction to the CBI to file a criminal case against Bhandari on corruption charges (one, of acquiring wealth disproportionate to his declared income). The CBI began its investigations. But Bhandari was swept back to power in March 1985, and on January 7, 1987, he withdrew sanction given to the CBI.

Dorji's petition argues that the State Government cannot withdraw the sanction given to the CBI to investigate corruption charges against public servants; Bhandari has no authority to withdraw it. A Division Bench of the Supreme Court has issued notice to the CBI. Asked about these cases, Bhandari said: "These cases were

foisted on me to curb me and the SSP. The fact that they were initiated by a Chief Minister who was in power for a mere 13 days proves my point."

In the run-up to the 1989 elections, in which the SSP made a 'clean sweep,' the party promised to provide citizenship to stateless residents of Sikkim, to work for the inclusion of the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and for reservation of seats in the Assembly for Nepalese of Sikkimese origin. Speaking to FRONTLINE, Bhandari credited himself with having achieved the first two objectives—though many in Sikkim and outside argue that West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu played no small role in getting the Nepali language included in the Eighth Schedule as a means of defusing the 'Gorkhaland' agitation.

However, political commentators feel Bhandari will use the issue of seat reservation in the Assembly to counter the "Chamling factor" to woo the Nepali community. They argue that a reservation for the majority population is ludicrous. As per the accession agreement of May 8, 1973, seats were reserved in the State Assembly for each ethnic group in Sikkim—including Nepalese, Lepchas, Bhutias and Tsongs of Sikkimese origin. In 1979, the Janata Government abolished the reservation of 15 seats for Sikkimese Tsongs and Nepalese. This, the SSP argues in a resolution passed on May 24, was "an emotional setback to the Sikkimese people." In other words, the party is equating the Bhutia-Lepchas, who account for about 20 per cent of the State's population, with the Nepalese. This slogan, it realises, could come in handy in the fight against Chamling.

The Supreme Court has upheld the reservation of seats for Bhutia-Lepchas, and there are now several petitions before it seeking seat reservation for Nepalese. Bhandari told FRONTLINE he wants 13 seats reserved for Nepalese—on a par with Bhutia-Lepchas. Alternatively, he calls for "parity on the basis of the proportion of different ethnic groups in the population." Put simply, this demand is clearly aimed at building a durable Nepali vote bank.

Dorji told FRONTLINE that despite the CBI cases against him, Bhandari continued with his ways. The State Government was in the red, burdened with a staggering overdraft of Rs. 184 crore. And the annual interest liability of the Government was over Rs. 19 crore. Dorji also alleged that "opponents of the Government are terrorised and even murdered."

Bhandari's strong-arm methods evoke an angry response from all Opposition parties in Sikkim. They complain that several political workers and journalists have been assaulted, kidnapped and publicly humiliated. The press of SIKKIM OBSERVER run by Jigme Kazi was destroyed, only recently has the paper managed to hit the stands again. Chamling said, "Bhandari says Sikkim is the most peaceful State in India. In Punjab, Assam and Kashmir, people are afraid of terrorism, but in Sikkim terrorism is government-run (sarkari athankwad)."

Having been the common victim of the same regime, the Opposition parties might well come together on a common platform.

Bhandari stares from posters all over Gangtok. They proclaim Sikkim Bhandari Hun, Bhandari Nai Sikkim Ho (Sikkim is Bhandari, Bhandari is Sikkim). This seems to confirm the general impression that Bhandari has centralised in his own hands all powers. And Bhandari is not one to observe such niceties as keeping the state machinery away from his own party's activities. This was evident in the deployment of the State machinery for the SSP's foundation day celebrations on May 24.

Many political observers feel that Bhandari may go in for early elections to prevent the "Chamling factor" from snowballing into a bigger political force. There is speculation that Bhandari may recommend Assembly elections after the Rajya Sabha elections in September. They point to the results of panchayat elections in February in which the Congress(I) and Chamling's followers, contesting as independent candidates, captured 60 per cent of the seats.

The other possibility is that he may hold elections on schedule in the hope that the SDF would become a spent force by then. This is his dilemma now: if he delays elections, it may give a chance for his opponents to regroup. And, if he holds them early, he may be in for a surprise. But this wily politician sounds confident: "My dexterity will ensure my success in the elections."

The more important question about the next elections is: where will Sikkim be led to in the competition between the SSP and the SDF to woo the Nepalese community?

#### **Mamata Banerjee's Politics Said Isolating Her in Bengal**

93AS0999J Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English  
3 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Tarun Ganguly: "Mamata Being Isolated in West Bengal"]

[Text] Calcutta, July 2—The choice before the maverick Youth Congress leader, Ms Mamata Banerjee, is becoming increasingly limited. She has already burnt her boats with the Pradesh Congress chief, Mr Somen Mitra, and by floating a parallel trade union body, she has antagonised the state Congress president, Mr Subrata Mukherjee.

Now that Ms Banerjee has distanced herself from the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] by proclaiming that "only secular and progressive forces are welcome to be associated with her Bengal line," her isolation in state politics appears to be complete. As things stand, she has to depend more and more on her personal charisma than on any organisational support.

Ms Banerjee antagonised Mr Mitra by launching agitations by herself and this did not go down too well with

the Pradesh Congress Chief. Relations between the two reached a new low when she took the initiative to facilitate only her supporters who won the panchayat elections on Congress tickets. Moreover, she did not consider it necessary to consult Mr Mitra for her proposed march to Writers' Buildings on July 14. Ms Banerjee's relations with Mr Subrata Mukherjee was always strained, and things became bitter when she floated the parallel trade union body.

The Bengal line, which she has been advocating for so long, is still woolly. She has maintained that all anti-CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] forces other than the BJP are welcome, but in the polarised political climate of West Bengal she can at best expect support from some unattached groups which have no organisation to talk of. The West Bengal government's ill-conceived plan for the revival of the Rabindra Sarovar project may after all provide her with the platform for organising such groups. It is likely that in environmentally conscious south Calcutta, she will be in a position to spearhead the movement which has all the potential to snowball into a major issue. But till date, she has not been able to muster large-scale support in rural Bengal.

It is unlikely that the Congress high command would lend her the much needed support in view of the political configuration. The Congress government at the Centre is in no mood to alienate the CPI(M) before the monsoon session of Parliament. In such a situation, Ms Banerjee ultimately might be left with no other choice but to form a regional party. In a similar situation in 1966, the late Ajay Mukherjee had to cut off his links with the Congress and went on to form the Bangla Congress.

#### **Increasing Obstacles Facing Leftist Politicians Viewed**

93AS1035A Calcutta DESH in Bengali  
3 Jul 93 pp 21-24

[Article by Shovanlal Dasgupta: "Left Politics: Some Questions"]

[Text] How bright is the future of Leftism today in India? On which path is it? Is the basic nature of the Left changing? Thousands of such questions about the credibility of the Left are being heard today from many people, and the Leftist circles are also no exception. Without having any hostile attitude, many among them—who respect and love the Left principles in the real sense and do not hesitate to introduce themselves as Leftists—are today distressed, dismayed, and doubtful at the sight of the recent shape of the Left politics. A little scrutiny might show that one of the reasons for this frustration is the beginning of a downward change in the sphere of Left politics from the eighties. Some of its characteristics are worth mentioning.

One: Successive increase in the Left's inertia in confronting different problems. Inside the country the issues



that gradually emerged in a big way included the question of casteism, resurgence of fundamentalism, infiltration of crime and corruption in different tiers of the whole administrative framework, and in its consequence the fast disappearance of the credibility of the liberal parliamentary system.

In the international sphere, the Left parties had to confront practically unbelievable events like the worldwide disaster in socialism and such easy dissolution of the communist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But the nature of the decisions taken in each case was in many ways instantaneous. In the majority of cases the complexity of the situation unilaterally controlled the flow in Left politics—it was not possible for the Leftists to prove their own credibility by establishing at least a little control on this unknown, unfamiliar situation. To understand why it was not possible, we have to draw our attention to another important side in this chapter.

Two: The ruling Congress (I) suffered the maximum loss as a result of the political instability that was created throughout the country following, first, Indira Gandhi and, then, Rajiv Gandhi's assassinations. On the other side, being enthusiastic about the success of the Left parties in the elections of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura and making use of this unstable situation, the Leftists succeeded in establishing themselves as a very important force in the anti-Congress (I) camp. As a result, different types of fronts were formed at different times between the Left and non-Left parties, and taking advantage of this—though the leftists could not increase their number of seats in the parliament and state legislative assemblies considerably—at least got a definite relief by escaping defeat, and at the same time tried to get Left politics into the Hindi belt and the South. It has certainly brought good-luck to the Left forces in the game of calculation of votes, but how much was its political worthiness—that question everyone tried to avoid. To give the highest importance to the electoral understanding or the question of augmenting the number of seats in the parliamentary politics, the Leftists had to support the politics of religion and casteism of the coalition parties; in the interest of elections it had to remain silent in many cases on the question of administrative corruption; for the purpose of keeping safe the electoral alliance, it had to provide help to such a candidate or a policy that could hardly assimilate with the politics of the Left. Since the formation of the national front, until today, the tug of war between the Left parties and different parties and groups inside this alliance is only a reflection of that uneasy situation. In short, while forming a government after winning the election, the Left parties found it very difficult to come out of the net of politics of elections, in which they were tangled, and as a result, the difference between the thoughts and principles of the Left and the actual day-to-day functioning of the Left parties was gradually manifested more prominently. This has certainly brought an election success to the Left parties for the

time being, but because of it Leftism has been harmed. And by holding this thread, another important factor for change in the nature of Left politics comes to our view.

Three: At the time when firm establishment of the Leftist unity, policy-allegiance, and credibility were absolutely necessary, only the disunity, group clashes and disputes among the partners in the Left circle increased gradually. Allegations of criminal activities were made against many persons, who were known as the Leftists, for corruption, nepotism, and various other malicious deeds—totally anti-Left activities. Or in other words, the image of the Left got dirtier as the distance between its views and its ways increased. It was an unprecedented situation certainly comparing it to the fifties and sixties, and also the seventies.

After considering these events, those who oppose the Left will reach the conclusion that, in fact, this is an inevitable outcome for the Left—the same has happened to the Soviet Union and East European countries. In other words, as per this argument the existence of the Left becomes practically trivial and irrelevant in today's India. Therefore, the only way left is to get rid of Leftism and the Leftists. But in this regard my views are totally different. The problem and the crisis is not that of Leftism, but the outlook of the Leftists [who need] to look at Leftism and see the complexity of the situation with a new look, or in other words, it is linked with the question of failure to add a new measure to the stratum of Leftist thinking. Failure or weakness, whatever we might call it, most of it has been derived from a kind of well-defined Leftist thought. Like the issues on class struggle, capturing of political power and so forth, in the field of historical feelings also, a very simplified singularity is a speciality of this thought. And from it grows biased thinking which ultimately harms Leftism only.

It is an undeniable fact that whatever differences might exist in the Left circles in our country, their thinking on certain issues is identical. Although there exist significant differences of opinion in the Left circle on the questions of the character of capitalism and the ways to set up socialism, all Leftists believe in the theory of class struggle and principles of scientific socialism. They are also unanimous on the issue that the final goal of the Leftists is to set up socialism in India by capturing political power and eradicating capitalism. At the same time they have so far moderately upheld the views that the position of the pro-socialist forces will be further strengthened immediately following a serious worldwide crisis in capitalism. It goes without saying that the primary basis of this overall framework of Left thinking is Marxism, which has been distorted at different times through various kinds of over-simplified explanations. If different components of Leftism are being examined from the viewpoint of scriptural dictum by denying or disregarding the circumstantial reality and multifarious complexity of the history, then the nature of Leftism that grows out of it will surely make life unpleasant. In the Indian politics of recent days basically this process is

flowing. The efforts are being made here to find out some of the causes its becoming like that.

If we first pay attention to the traditional objectives and intentions of the Leftist movement, then it will be noticed that basically the fight that was unleashed, resorting to the theory of class struggle, was a fight for bread and butter and a struggle for meeting economic demands. It is an undeniable fact that the need for this struggle has not ended even today, and there was a time when, for historical reasons, this struggle was at the forefront. Therefore, to the Leftists, for relevant reasons, the crisis in India's capitalist path was manifested time and again as basically an all-devouring economic crisis. Since the implementation of the new economic policy, this thinking has further become firm among the Leftist elements. These are all true and rational, but there existed big loopholes. As the economic crisis on the capitalism path intensified, adjacent to it amassed slowly but practically with a spontaneous flow a grave social crisis—the source of many of its material remained dormant, deep a social system that was built over thousands of years in this country—and sheltered in it grew in general our anti-science, conservative, rigid, and fanatic mental attitude. Although the extent of social crisis due to the increased economic crisis is perhaps now being exposed more openly and nakedly, there exists, in fact, no effective relationship between all these developments and the capitalist economic development of the past four decades. There is a dual purpose in saying this thing. One, while giving importance so far to the economic crisis and the struggle for economic demands in general, we have neglected a very complex but free existence of a social crisis. Therefore, encountering the economic crisis or even the setting up of a full-fledged socialism overnight in the country and replacing the new economic policy, we will not be able to bring any relief to the social crisis. The sheltering of such abnormal social attitudes, such as religious hatred, tremendous over-sensitivity on the question of casteism, and strict conservatism on the issue of sex differences, has further intensified caste hatred, religious frenzy, harassment of women, and various other unsocial activities. The Leftist circle has perhaps the need to think about the fact that the intensity and extent of the social crisis in India has completely created a new situation by inundating the depth of the economic crisis in the past decade, and any confrontation with it requires the building up of a suitable outlook on social research. In this sphere we have to fight on a completely new path, not singing only the great traditional victory songs of India but by exposing the dark sides of our society and culture and most probably giving priority to the social problems.

When this all-devouring crisis in the society is engaged in proving the weakness in the credibility of the whole system, various non-Leftist parties, forces, and groups taking advantage of it are, themselves, trying to survive in a better way by prolonging the process. The development of open intimacy between religious gurus and

leaders and the political leaders at different periods in recent times, and making arrangements for entertaining the public minds by giving them religious tickling through the means of the government media are all basically a kind of political strategy that brings good results at the time of elections. Therefore, the Leftists are also calculating this thing when they give first importance to the politics of election, or in other words, select candidates for little sensitive areas on the basis of caste and religion.

In the noise of election victory all these questions are suppressed, but it slowly weakens the foundation of Leftism. If the Leftists have to make some progress, especially in today's India, then they have to consider the question of selecting candidates for election without paying any heed to caste, community, or religion. Otherwise in the eyes of the history, the Leftists will also be indirectly involved with the charges of using religion and casteism for keeping the system alive.

And if it has to do something like this, then the Leftist politics should have to get itself very closely tied with these social problems or in other words, it has to add a new measure to the traditional ideas cherished for such a long time in relation to political struggle. The late Shankar Guha started practically the same type of work, which was a bright exception to the history of the Left movement. If the pollution of environment, addiction to drugs, child labor, harassment to women, and such other innumerable so-called social problems are not linked with the political struggle, and if the old fashioned language and character of the Left movement are not changed by adding this kind of new measure, then the Left politics of tomorrow will be reduced to a hackneyed formality.

One of the possible reasons that does not allow the Leftists to come out easily from their customary veils of thinking, is their very simplified ideas centering around the question of capturing political power. In fact, all Leftist parties think that the capturing of political power is simply taking government administrative machinery in hand. Everyone will agree to the fact that while accepting the norms and practice of the parliamentary system, it is not possible to constitute an alternative people-oriented system by dissolving overnight the prevailing administrative machinery. That is why, after winning the elections when the Left parties captured the government power in the states like West Bengal and Tripura, it was then attributed as a political victory of the Left forces. The capturing of political power means the grabbing of government power, but in this easy equation there remains more than one serious loophole and that perhaps requires a fresh consideration of the Leftists.

First, even after bringing radical addition and alteration at different tiers of government machinery, it is not possible today for any Leftist government to overlook the fact that the government system has its own official framework and a kind of special character from which

emanates the concept of authority. This disposition of authoritative framework in the administrative system influences, and in many cases controls, the functioning of the Leftist government and thereby weakens the Leftist credibility. When the coalition parties to the Left Front do some self-criticism of their performance in the West Bengal Left Front government, this problem crops up prominently in a round-about manner at different meetings. Second, the Left government confronts several complex problems for equating the capturing of government power with political power. A great indifference and apathy in the sphere of criticizing the government system and administration creates the idea that the political character of the government system has changed, and if the Leftists also do the criticism, then it manifests a kind of severe intolerance, and in addition, practically on a parallel road, builds up the dependence of the Left parties on the administration and government with the calculation that there is nothing wrong in the expansion of the Left political thinking by making use of the administrative machinery. A question is being raised: How much does the Left-thinking expand when it approaches the common man wearing a government badge on itself?

Exceeding all these questions another more complex and fundamental question that emerged prominently in this connection was: Is the Left's purpose to capture political power in today's world by obtaining the power of government after winning an election by grabbing a few seats, or to capture politically the minds and thinking of the toiling masses coming from the various strata of the society? If Leftism means a special realization of life—which gives importance to the social rather than individual interests and desires to set up a healthy social system with the direct and active cooperation of the common people—then it is necessary to infuse these feelings and thoughts deep into the intellect and thinking of the human beings. In its relations with the unbelievable progress in technology, capitalism is trying to contain the critical condition of its world-wide economic slump by drowning human beings in the all-devouring, hedonist cultural mud. The cruel clutches of this amusing commercial culture of the people is today swiftly conquering man's brain and in its consequence the human existence is becoming absolutely meaningless. To repel these politics of maintaining status quo by inactivating the thoughts and intellect of man, the Leftists will have to think about constituting another alternative policy whose one objective will be to build a counter, pro-life feeling and culture. Not by neglecting the technology, but by taking it along and using it and thereby achieving a victory by utilizing all ingredients of modern technology in the fight to capture man's thinking and intellect, or his brain, will be the principal measuring rod of capturing the political power by the Leftists.

The political circle appears to us to be very big, more vivacious, and meaningful when we see the things in this manner. The Left politics will be called successful only when the meaning of life and culture of the

Leftists get wider expression through active initiatives and deeds of the people. If the Leftist elements have anything worthwhile to learn from the events in the former Soviet Union, then one of its sides is: to judge political power by keeping it confined within the boundaries of state administration, and in its consequence, politics is reduced to an all possessive bureaucratic government. [as published] Tracking that path causes group clashes, power struggle, and corruption, and that explains the separation between the people and Leftism and the Leftists.

One more question remains at the end: Why do we see the shadow of sluggishness, hesitation, and confusion in the Leftist views in understanding and analyzing the most modern and complex new world that we are facing today at the doorstep of the 21st century? At the root of it lies a kind of old-fashioned, singularity in historical feelings. The multiplicity of historical perception of Marx—keeping aside the fineness and complexities in his thoughts—has turned the historical thinking into a government commentary and that has only one meaning: the fall of capitalism and emergence of socialism. Both are inevitable, because it is a scientific truth. The majority of the Leftists did not bother with questions such as how to utilize modern technology to contain crises one after the other, and also how putrefaction and seeds of decline entered into a many-year-old established socialist system. There is no scope in giving shelter to thinking that crisis might come even to socialism if the destiny is fixed, or serious mistakes have taken place in the process of building socialism. All these things have happened due to the inevitable consequence of, on one side, the new technological challenge and negligence toward its influence and, on the other, considering socialism as a kind of synonym to the state and centralization of the party. Some thinking has started so late on these issues in the Leftist circle, and one of the reasons for it is this mechanical and singularity in historical feelings. This simple historical perception gave birth to a kind of complacency and blind views, because whenever some one among the Leftists goes deep and tries to say something like this, looking beyond the surface that there exist many confusing things and many dark past chapters in the established socialism or asks to analyze without any illusion the reasons for the survival of capitalism by accepting its skill and technological achievements, then he becomes an outcast and portrayed in the name of revisionist, counter-revolutionary and enemy to socialism. In the past, since the Russian revolution, many people have shown the courage in the history of socialist thinking to utter such impertinent things in the Soviet Union itself and in more than one European country. But resorting to the most simplified singularity in historical feelings—which provided shelter and brought comfort to the influential section of the Leftist circle in the world and also in this country and that easily resolved complicated problems like whose presence is desirable and whose not inside the party—these alternative thoughts and feelings were kept far away for so many days, calling them unnecessary and irrelevant. No the



time has come for the Leftists to turn their heads to some extent toward the old thoughts of the past in which lie some indications of gaining freedom from the inertia of one-track thinking.

It is necessary for the Leftists to seriously think today of the fact that the historical feelings of Marx—the father of Leftism—was built through the intense analysis of the complex changes in contemporary history and reality of his time. Assessing the multiplicity of history, he tried to understand the nature of conflict and collision in a capitalist society and these careful historical feelings gave birth to his politics. Therefore, life's feelings merged with politics and historical perception also within Marx's own existence. This far-reaching synthesis gave Leftism its own importance and prestige. If the Leftists fail to attain the attitude of seeing the new world with new eyes by denying the realities of life, then there is no possible way for them to understand how capitalism is fast changing its own features and surviving in India despite its extreme political instability and thousands of problems and weaknesses. This analysis is not possible by remaining in the safe shelter of the singularity of historical feelings. The nature of political outlook that emanates from this singularity of historical feelings is bound to be artificial and apathetic to life. To bring a change in this static Leftist condition, it is necessary for the Leftists today to develop these new historical feelings, connect them to life, and then spread them to different spheres of our social system. This new historical perception could expand the old-fashioned political circle, known for such a long time to the Leftists, and crumble its narrow boundaries. And in these bigger surroundings the Leftists have to decide about their political strategy for the future.

#### **Murli Joshi Interviewed on Congress' Failure in Kashmir**

93AS0999C New Delhi ORGANISER in English  
4 Jul 93 pp 13-14

[Interview with Murli Manohar Joshi by ORGANISER: "Left to Themselves, Congressmen Would Not Mind Donating Kashmir"; place and date not given]

[Text] Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi was preparing to go to Bangalore when we met him at his residence in New Delhi, and sought his views on Kashmir. The brief conversation went like this:

[ORGANISER] After the Ekta Yatra, Kashmir issue was brought to the forefront! Did you find any change?

[Joshi] This government consists of people who have no idea about Kashmir or the happenings in Kashmir. They don't have any Kashmir policy. For them Kashmir is only Kashmir Valley—that too the Kashmiri-speaking Muslims. They don't understand that there is Ladakh, there is Jammu. And they know that they have destroyed Jammu and Kashmir [J&K] in the name of secularism. They have been pampering Muslims, Kashmiri-speaking Muslims, pampering people

like Farooq Abdullah and his tribe, and under international pressure they prepared to do anything. Congressmen, if left to themselves, will play havoc with Kashmir which they are playing, and to my mind they are prepared to donate Kashmir to anybody.

[ORGANISER] How?

[Joshi] Just see the alternatives they are discussing—the third alternative, the fourth alternative, the second alternative. The government is sitting pretty. They are not taking any diplomatic initiative to clear the cobwebs about Kashmir in the Western mind and Western diplomats.

[ORGANISER] What should the government do?

[Joshi] They should tell the world that a genocide is taking place in Kashmir. After all what Kashmiriat means. Does Kashmir belong to Muslims alone? Do the Kashmiri Pandits, the Kashmiri Buddhists, those Sikhs and Muslims who swear that Kashmir is an integral part of India, have no right to exist? Why the situation has not been explained? Kashmiri Pandits represent Kashmir Shaivism. It is a culture, it is a history. How is it that they have been ousted from their homes and converted into refugees? This is the case of a destruction of a civilisation, a culture, or a sub-culture. And you argue that since the Muslims in the Valley are numerically larger in number they have right to extricate all others from the Valley? What will be the logical interpretation of this in other parts of the country?

[ORGANISER] Would you call it ethnic cleansing?

[Joshi] Yes. It is a cultural, linguistic, political and ethnic cleansing totally.

[ORGANISER] Are there any chances of retrieving the position?

[Joshi] Yes. If this Central government is thrown out, then only something can be done. Each day of this government in office is creating more and more problems in the speedy solution of this problem.

[ORGANISER] What do you think is the solution?

[Joshi] The basic thing is that the Government of India must restore its authority in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir and for that Article 370 has to be removed. The basic thing is that you have to convince terrorists and anti-national elements that they cannot take away Kashmir from India, that secession is not possible. Unless we send a very clear and loud message to them, nothing will work because every day the Government talks to the militants, the message is wait, those militants are coming to power. Then why should anybody support Government of India?

But if the message is nothing doing, no nonsense. First stop this militancy, surrender arms, come to constitutional ways. A process can be initiated for fair elections. Then there should be regional councils for Ladakh,

Jammu and the Valley so that there is no heart-burning, no discrimination; money is earmarked for each region and they develop according to their own genius. After sometime when these areas feel that the councils are not necessary, they can be done away with.

[ORGANISER] It is said that a certain section of people are alienated from Indian mainstream. What should be done to bring them into the mainstream?

[Joshi] First of all you must give a loud message that the Government of India is in full command of the situation. You see if they (alienated) find that it is the gun-bearing terrorists who are going to rule, the alienation remains complete. Most of the alienation arises from the fact that there is nobody to defend them. I know a large number of Muslims who are Gujjars. They are ready to fight militants. They say that "give us arms and we shall throw them out." But the government says that they cannot be given arms.

[ORGANISER] Government says that the alienation is because of poverty?

[Joshi] If it were so, then why is there no alienation in Kalahandi where there is no food, no water, no jobs. The alienation comes from the feeling that I belong to a different civilisation; my religion is different; my aspirations are different. After all if there was any discrimination, who was responsible for it? Not the Government of India. It was either J&K government run by Sheikh Abdullah, or Bakshiji, Mir Qasim, Gul Shah. But if they hold Government of India and the people of India responsible for it; if they are so unintelligent, what can I do about it.

Why are they fighting against Indian nation? I can understand that there were certain follies—like rigged elections. But that does not mean that they have a right to secede. Let them first surrender arms. only then a process of political set-up can be considered and their grievances met.

#### **Former CBI Director: Investigate Harshad's Claim**

93AS0980J Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 9

[Article by K. Madhavan; former joint director of CBI; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The allegation by Harshad Mehta that he paid Rs one crore to Prime Minister Narasimha Rao has four aspects—political, JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee], civil and criminal. I am not competent to deal with the first two, but can offer suggestions regarding the rest.

Harshad Mehta first made the allegation openly at a press conference in Bombay on 16 June, 1993, with the advice and in the company of Ram Jethmalani—one of the leading criminal lawyers in the country—lawyer

Mahesh Jethmalani and others. He stated that he had paid Rs one crore to the Prime Minister in two instalments. Such an admission is legally termed as an extrajudicial confession. His allegation may or may not be true. In fact, this is so in a large number of criminal cases (FIRs) which are registered by the police and the Central Bureau of Investigation [CBI].

Two legal options: Apart from what the CBI should do, there are two possible legal options open to the Prime Minister, namely (a) filing through a public prosecutor a criminal complaint of defamation under Section 500 IPC [Indian Penal Code] against Harshad Mehta and (b) filing a civil suit for damages. In fact, the Prime Minister could, if he deems fit, do so right now without waiting for any Governmental agency to enquire into the matter.

Section 20(1) of PC Act lays down that if it is proved that a public servant accepted any gratification (other than legal remuneration) or any valuable thing from any person, it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, that he accepted it as a motive or reward as mentioned in Section 7 of the Act. In other words, it is not necessary to prove quid pro quo in such a case.

The CBI has a statutory duty to look into the allegations. But is it necessary that it should register an FIR [First Information Report]? It may do so if it deems fit, but it need not. In my view, it should not, as the allegation is against the Prime Minister of the country and the FIR could be registered later after the allegation is verified to some extent.

In respect of such cases, the Supreme Court has, in *P Sirajuddin v State of Madras* (AIR 1971 Sc 520 laid down that a preliminary enquiry could be conducted by the police before an FIR is registered.) As the allegation has been made openly, CBI has a duty to register at least a 'registration report' in a 'preliminary enquiry' (PE). In other words, a formal PE should be registered. (Please note that I am not advocating a mere verification without registering a PE. A PE must be formally registered.)

No complaint is required by the CBI for this. In fact, about 75 per cent of the CBI cases are registered suo moto by the CBI without any complaint. During the enquiry, the following inter alia would be the evidence to be collected by the CBI:

—All visitors' registers, appointment diaries, security registers, counterfoils of visitors slips, etc., at (a) PM's office and (b) PM's residence. These documents should be very carefully scrutinised to check continuity of page numbers, serial numbers and correct chronology. The most relevant pages should be subjected to forensic examination, including photography under ultra violet light and infra red rays, to rule out chemical or physical erasure of original entries and overwriting.

—Relevant telephone bills and computerised telephone records etc., of Harshad Mehta, Holiday Inn, the Mittals, Mohan Khandelwal and other concerned persons.

—If any document is reported to be weeded out (destroyed) by the Government, the following related documents are relevant:

\*General instructions on weeding out of documents issued by the Ministry of Personnel of Government of India from time to time during the past five years.

\*General instructions issued by the PMO [Prime Minister's Office] and PM's [Prime Minister] residential office regarding period of preservation of documents and their weeding out.

\*General instructions issued from time to time, during the past five years by (i) Chief Security Officer, Ministry of Home Affairs, and (ii) security authorities including SPG [Special Protection Group], in PMO and PM's residence regarding procedure of maintenance and weeding out visitors' reception registers, counterfoils of visitors' slips and other related documents.

\*Notes put up by the dealing hands, from November 1, 1991 onwards till now, stating permission to destroy the documents to be weeded out and orders passed by the competent authorities. Under GOI [Government of India] instructions, no destruction of a file/document can be made, even though the prescribed period of preservation is over, without specific orders in the file.

\*Weeding out registers at PMO and PM's residence. According to instructions, entries have to be made chronologically and serially in this register, giving particulars of the documents which have been destroyed on each occasion (e.g., File No..., Visitors Register of the period 1-5-92 to 14.8.92, counterfoils of visitors' slips of the period 1.5.92 to 14.8.92, etc.)

—Documents of Government, Stock Exchange, etc., regarding the quid pro quo alleged by Harshad Mehta.

—Bank documents regarding withdrawal of relevant cash.

—Documents of Indian Airlines, Holiday Inn, etc.

—Examine thoroughly all the concerned persons and record their statements. This would include also the persons, if any, who weeded out the relevant documents and all persons who met the PM at the relevant time.

—Putting the concerned persons through polygraphy (lie detector) test.

—Check the original tape of purported conversation between Harshad Mehta and Mittal and get it checked by a forensic scientist (audio expert) to see if it is in proper order or has been tampered with. Tape recorded evidence is admissible, subject to certain

parameters prescribed by the Supreme Court (S. Partap Singh [PS] vs State of Punjab AIR 1964 Sc 72; Yusuf Ali Ismail Nagree v State of Maharashtra AIR 1986 SC 147. N. Sreerama Reddy v VV Giri AIR 1971 SC 1162, etc.).

—Record specimen voices of Harshad Mehta, Sunil Mittal and others whose voices are recorded in the tape (a) directly and (b) in a simulated condition by making them speak over a telephone and testing the authenticity and identities of the persons concerned, whose voices are in the disputed tape, by comparison in voice spectrography machine.

—Obtain specimen and standard writings and signatures of the persons concerned and refer the disputed called questioned documents to the handwriting expert.

—Interrogate the suspected persons thoroughly with reference to the evidence collected and obtain their explanation.

—Attend to such other points which may crop up during the enquiry.

Not proof enough: The mere entry and signature in a visitors' register of a person does not conclusively prove that he met the officer or minister concerned whose name or designation is entered in the register. Following are some of the contingencies in which full-fledged entries may exist in the register without any meeting taking place:

—The visitor meets the PS or PA who states that the relevant papers will be called for and studied by the officer or minister and it is enough if the visitor meets the officer or minister thereafter. Then the visitor would leave without meeting either of them.

—After giving the appointment, the officer/minister gets preoccupied with some urgent work or may not be physically available in the office due to which the PS or the PA may ask the visitor to come on a later date or at a later time on the same day.

—The appointment may be say at 3 p.m. and the register may show this. But the officer or minister may not be available and the visitor may be asked to wait. Finally, the meeting may take place say at 3.30 p.m. only. The register would continue to show the time as 3 p.m.

Entry in the visitors' register is therefore proof only of the fact that the person concerned had entered the particular building on that date and time. The visitor himself, the PS or PA as well as the officer/minister should therefore be examined during the enquiry to prove whether or not the meeting took place.

If on such detailed enquiry, the allegation is proved to be false, Harshad Mehta could be prosecuted by CBI under Section 211 of the IPC. In fact, this should be done as he should not be allowed to get away lightly when he makes a false allegation against the Prime Minister himself.



This will also prove as a deterrent and prevent others in future from making such false allegations against people in high places.

**CBI's duty:** If, however, the allegation appears to be prima facie correct or if even there are reasons to suspect that it could be correct, CBI has a statutory duty under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 to register an FIR and take it up for regular and statutory investigation. Such a case is called a Regular Case (RC) in CBI. During such investigation, all the available evidence should be formally collected under the provisions of the Cr.PC. If on the conclusion of the investigation, it is proved that the allegation is correct, CBI should obtain the sanction of the President and prosecute the Prime Minister under Section 7 of PC Act. Harshad Mehta should also be prosecuted under Section 12 of PC Act for which no sanction of any authority is required. Thereafter, the court would be seized of the matter.

Under Section 114 (g) of the Evidence Act, 1872, the court can draw an adverse inference that if any person who could produce any evidence does not produce it, then such evidence would be unfavourable to such person who withholds the evidence. This would apply equally to Harshad Mehta in respect of any evidence which is available with him and also to the Prime Minister in respect of the relevant visitors' registers, etc., at the PM's residence, if their formal destruction at the relevant times is not proved by the contemporaneous weeding out documents.

**Law is higher:** As against this, not enquiring into or investigating this case would be a tragedy. If Harshad Mehta is lying, his goose must be properly cooked. If he is telling the truth, then the natural legal consequences should follow. "However high you are, the law is still higher than you" should be the guiding principle. Merely to state that Harshad Mehta is a proved fraudster and, therefore, no enquiry need be done on any allegation openly made by him would be wrong. After all, it is only a person like him who would pay a large bribe to get his work done. A citizen like you would pay only a maximum of Rs 100 to get your ration card issued or to get verification for your passport done. The higher the stakes, the greater the corruption.

#### **Narmada Project: Gujarat Government Said Unprepared**

93AS0980H Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 8

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] A preliminary review of the controversial Narmada project, preparatory to deciding how best to proceed from this point onwards, is the most sensible course of action. This is what seems to have been in Union Minister for Irrigation and Water, V.C. Shukla's mind when he summoned, at the urging of the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, the concerned states and representatives of the Narmada Bachao Andolan [NBA] to Delhi for talks last week. It

would seem also that NBA leader, Medha Patkar, who gave up her indefinite fast in Bombay, was persuaded that the talks, which she attended and about which few details are known, would have to be exploratory in nature at this stage. It is therefore premature to ask whether or not the Delhi discussions amounted to a breakthrough in the long-drawn-out struggle against the dam. It was a pause for breath, so to speak, a necessary pause for all sides to take stock of the situation. Gujarat's regrettable decision to absent itself was an unnecessary attempt to rob the event of any real significance.

The Union government has clearly not committed itself to a comprehensive review of the Narmada project which is the NBA's basic demand. Obviously, the Centre is in no position to take a unilateral decision on what would amount, in effect, to questioning and redoing the whole elaborate cost-benefit sums on the Rs 1,300 crore (present estimate) Sardar Sarovar dam and other related dam and canal projects. Not only are four states involved but a quasi-legal framework of agreements and tribunal awards governs the matter. Although many voluntary and environmental groups support the NBA's case that the whole foundation of the SSP [Samyukta Socialist Party] is false, nothing has been able to budge Gujarat from its pursuit of the project. Popular opinion within the state, rightly or wrongly, still tends to support the Chimanbhai government on the Narmada project. Unless that changes, unless the presumed beneficiaries in Kutch and Saurashtra and those threatened to be displaced by the dams and canals can be mobilised against the project, there are severe limits to what outside intervention can achieve.

Taken together, the human and environmental impact of the Narmada project, and its serious hydrological shortcomings, which the Gujarat government has deliberately underplayed and has even neglected to study properly, may well add up to a case against the project altogether. But that case has to be made to the people of Gujarat who have been persuaded to view opposition to the dam as a 'conspiracy' against the state. Meanwhile, although Gujarat resists the question of who big dam projects benefit in the long run, it has been responsive to early criticism about its R & R provisions and now has a relatively better programme for dam oustees than other states. It must be pressed to recognise the rights of thousands of canal oustees, who have been completely ignored so far, and to make full R & R provision for them.

#### **Editorial Warns Congress Party of Imminent Death**

93AS0980G Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Reform or Perish"]

[Text] Arjun Singh's letter to the Congress President's political secretary, Jitendra Prasada, strongly suggesting certain measures to revamp the party organisation, clearly represents a tactical shift of postures on the part

of the Union Human Resource Development Minister. Instead of persisting in his earlier role of a strong critic of the Prime Minister and Congress President, Narasimha Rao, he now wants to project himself as a party reformer. In this way, he can not only keep himself in the limelight but gain goodwill in the party by pressing for reforms which the vast bulk of Congressmen want. Had he persisted in his earlier role, he would have alienated them by striking a divisive chord when the perceived need was for closing ranks in the face of the Bharatiya Janata Party's [BJP] political offensive and Harshad Mehta's charge against the Prime Minister.

Whatever Singh's calculations, one can hardly ignore the fact that the Congress is now in the grip of both organisational and mental paralysis. This is sharply underlined by its failure to come out with a political and ideological counterthrust to the BJP's political offensive and failure to cope with Harshad Mehta's allegation that he has given Rs one crore to Narasimha Rao. The Surajkund meeting of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), which was aimed at devising a strategy to fight communalism, concentrated on pulverising dissidents in the party. The Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting at Bhopal, held in the aftermath of Harshad Mehta's allegation against the Prime Minister, generated only hot air. At this rate, the Congress is bound to be trounced in the Assembly elections which are scheduled to take place in Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in November this year. Not only is the BJP strongly entrenched in these states where its governments were dismissed in the wake of the Ayodhya demolitions in December last year, but the dismissals seem to have created a wave of public sympathy for it.

Arjun Singh's suggestion to constitute the Congress's Parliamentary Board, fill up vacancies in the Working Committee, appoint the full complement of office-bearers, set up election committees at state and central levels, end ministerial interference in the constituencies of others, revitalise the front organisations and remove overage office-bearers from their positions, enumerates the minimum preliminary steps the party needs to take. That Arjun Singh has had to write to Jitendra Prasada mentioning these and suggesting action on some of these by July 15, is a telling commentary on the state of the party. The question is whether the coterie surrounding Narasimha Rao will allow him to take these measures which will threaten its stranglehold on the party's organisation or will scuttle these on some plea or the other. Dark days are ahead for the Congress if it succeeds in doing the latter.

#### Kancheepuram: Political Rally Gets Violent

93AS0980F Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 5

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE, Kancheepuram—The Pattali Makkal Katchi's (PMK) state-level meeting

cum agitation (Arbatta Urvalam) on Sunday evening turned out to be just that, with the marchers going berserk and attacking hotels and buses, injuring several persons in the process.

The procession of some 6,000 volunteers assembled at the Toll Gate at 6 in the evening. The very arrival of the lorries to the spot was raucous and belligerent, even provocative. They had originally asked for permission to take out the procession between 2 pm and 4 in the afternoon. But the start itself was way behind the permitted hours. When the marchers reached the bus stand, Dr. Ramdoss himself most unexpectedly appeared on the scene which seemed to galvanize the processionists in a big way. They at once started doubling back towards the bus stand, instead of moving onward along the permitted route.

As a result, the buses that had been stopped to let go the massive rally, were now in the path of the processionists who were running amok to enter the PS High School venue by a short-cut, which had not been prepared for their entry. All of a sudden stones—big boulders—were hurled at a hotel in the corner. Stones were thrown at buses and at the police jeep which sought to control them. Nine busmen were hurt.

Flagstuffs came in handy for the PMK men for attacking shops and vehicles. Finally, order was restored after the police regulated entry of the PMK men into the High School grounds.

Soon afterwards, when Dr. Ramdoss came into the bus stand to hoist the PMK flag in front of the depot, many AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] busmen walked up to him and showed him the injuries caused by the PMK attack, upon which the doctor consoled them. He refused to appear on the dais for a long time even as local speakers kept up a screaming tempo about police "misdeeds" (while containing them). It is believed that he was aware of the goings-on and condemned the whole thing. He first refused to appear before the audience to address them as a result. Finally, when he did appear, it was to give a lack-lustre speech. He spoke a few words that did not touch upon the evening's incidents.

It is reasonable to assume that the whole thing had been pre-planned. Traders and hoteliers had been pressed for money ('donation') for the procession, and those who had not complied with—or had parted with only smaller amounts than demanded—were all attacked. Boulders were thrown from lorries where they had already been stocked.

Earlier, there was a PMK meet in June at Tiruttani, and similar scenes of extreme provocation were witnessed. Processionists teased and harassed cyclists, and policemen were bullied and teased into getting tough. Somehow that crisis passed.

One trader who suffered a loss (of property) of Rs.4,000 in Sunday's incident says, "Every year the tradesmen

have to part with huge sums to all parties to keep them in good humour. But it becomes just impossible when they keep hiking their demands every time."

### Judge Refuses Stay of Ban on RSS

93AS0980D Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 1

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi—The Supreme Court on Monday declared that there was never any ban on the Rashtriya Swyam Sevak Sangh (RSS) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, even though the Union Government had issued a notification for its "immediate" ban on December 10, 1992, four days after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

This was so because under the law the notification could come into force only after it had been approved by the Tribunal. Further admittedly no reason was mentioned in the 'notification' as to why the ban was being brought into force from December 10, 1992. Accordingly vacation judge Justice N.P. Singh, who repeatedly told this to Union Government counsel K. Parasaran, refused the Government's insistent prayer for a stay of the June 4 order of the Bahri Tribunal which had struck down the declaration banning the RSS and the Bajrang Dal. The judge stated, "there is simply nothing to stay. Even a stay of the order of the Tribunal will not revive the ban notification since it never came into force."

Vacation judge Singh, issued notice to the RSS and the Bajrang Dal on the special leave petition of the Union Government against the Tribunal's order and gave liberty to the Union Government to mention the case before the Chief Justice of India's court for an early hearing. He said: "this is an urgent and sensitive matter and both parties must know where they stand."

But the effect of today's declaration and the order refusing stay of the Bahri Tribunal decision is that no RSS or Bajrang Dal activity can be now stopped by the Union Government and none of their members can be held by the police for their alleged activities since December 10 last year since there was never a ban order. The order of the court says that "no prima facie case has been made out for staying the order of the Tribunal.

Former Attorney General Parasaran was hard put to defend the ban and the Notification in the face of the judge's questions. When the judge dictated in the order "admittedly no reasons have been mentioned in the Notification as to why the ban was being brought into force from December 10, 1992," Parasaran contended that there may be grounds of public interest for not mentioning the reasons in the Notification. Justice Singh told him, "then at least this formality should have been

observed of stating that on grounds of public interest the reasons are not being given in the Notification. But even that has not been done."

When Justice Singh pointed out to him that the Union Government was asking for a stay of something that did not exist, Parasaran said, "I cannot argue that the sun rises in the West." However, when Justice Singh wanted to put in the order that Parasaran had conceded that there was no ground for a stay the latter opposed this. He said a stay must be granted because "suppose tomorrow these parties say that they will demolish another Masjid and want to use their money for this." U.R. Lalit, counsel for the RSS and S.S. Khanduja counsel for the Bajrang Dal, opposed this. The judge stated in his order that "any observation in this order does not preclude the bench hearing the case from examining this aspect" of the prayer for a stay.

At the outset Lalit had raised the "preliminary objection" that no appeal could lie to the Supreme Court since the order of the Tribunal is merely administrative in nature. Justice Singh, however, told him that he did not think much of this argument and pointed out that under the Act the Tribunal discharged quasi judicial functions. Khanduja contended that even if an appeal did lie then also the Supreme Court had been discouraging parties from coming to the apex court and the Union Government should go to the high court. That also was not taken serious note of by the judge.

### Pranab Mukherjee's Political Annihilation Viewed

93AS0980C Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] New Delhi—Poor Pranab Mukherjee finds that everything has conspired against him almost in vicious harmony. He has to give up his chair as Commerce Minister which he has been trying to guard with single-handed devotion. For he is unable to earn an elective seat in Parliament within the stipulated six-month period after his induction into the council of ministers.

Everyone was working, as it were, in unintended concert to deny Mukherjee a seat in Rajya Sabha well on time. The Election Commission, the West Bengal Government, the Congress leadership were all party to this dubious Pranab Project. The party leadership did not give him a seat elsewhere. The West Bengal Government got locked in a battle with a pugnacious Election Commission. The Commission chose not to do things at a pace that would have suited Mukherjee.

Mukherjee's six-month term as an unelected minister ends on July 16. A normal process of election to Rajya Sabha is spread over 18 days. But it can be shortened by seven days if it is evident that there will be no contest for the seat in question. That has been Mukherjee's last



hope. That hope would have, perhaps, fructified if the election to six seats from West Bengal were notified on Monday. Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan, however, had priorities other than Mukherjee's. The notification did not come on Monday. It would be no solace to Mukherjee that a chief electoral officer for West Bengal has been finally found by Seshan.

The exploration for a seat for Mukherjee had begun the day he was made a minister by Narasimha Rao. It had to begin so early since Mukherjee had never been encumbered by any popular political base anywhere. He has never been a Lok Sabha member. When he contested once out of his current party, he lost—by an unmentionable margin. Politically a stranger in his own state, Mukherjee had to go in search of seats elsewhere in the country, seeking his partymen's munificence.

So election work has been an eternal penance for Pranab Mukherjee. And there have been many to work for him, not the least that Bombay-based Reliable industrial house.

As his unelected term was ending, speculation became rife: Who will oblige him? Who will make way for him? When Viswasrao Patil resigned his Rajya Sabha seat in a sudden burst of ideological conviction some days ago, everyone looked up. Knowing Mukherjee and his reliable industrial friends as India does, he was seen as an inevitable beneficiary of the arranged coincidence of Patil's exit. But, for some silly reason, his party leadership could not get that seat for Mukherjee.

That was when he started wooing his sworn foes, Communists, in his own state.

It is a measure of Mukherjee's and his promoters' process that he did build a bastion of sympathy in the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] circles in West Bengal. Jyoti Basu's silent support was won over, somehow or the other. Once that done, state secretary Sailen Dasgupta and Finance Minister Asim Dasgupta were to fall in line as a matter of course. But Basu's acolytes were all not to have it their way, at least not always. Reports of resistance to the Basu plan have already come from sources close to the state secretariat of the party.

Some politburo members are well aware that any active or passive support to Mukherjee who has been declared as the principal protagonist of the Dunkel Draft, so much of an anathema to them, will be tantamount to ugly collaboration with forces of political reaction. A section of them are therefore serious about making Mukherjee's election as difficult as possible. Politburo members have already had informal discussions about such a hideous scenario.

Their point of view has prevailed even before the state committee meeting in Calcutta on July 10 and 11. The Left Front has decided to field candidates for all six states, that is, including the sixth one on which Mukherjee has set his eyes. This makes one thing certain:

The party will not have to face the ridiculously dialectical question whether it should serve as Mukherjee's saviour too? It cannot. It makes certain another thing too: Mukherjee will have to face a contest. What is not so certain is whether he will win the contest and recapture his chair, if after a short break.

### Joint Parliamentary Committee Debates Summoning Rao

93AS0980B Madras *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English  
6 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] New Delhi—The stage is set for a stormy meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Tuesday as Opposition members are determined to press for the summoning of Narasimha Rao and other key witnesses in the Rs 1-crore payoff allegation by Harshad Mehta while the Congress members are bent on scuttling this move.

Opposition members said it was extremely important to call all the persons connected directly or indirectly with the alleged payoff episode to verify the claims made by the Big Bull at a press conference and before the JPC on June 30 as it had linked corruption to the highest public office in the country. The summoning of vital documents including records from Prime Minister's residence, Bombay Stock Exchange and the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] mentioned by the Big Bull was also of equal importance, they said.

The persons who Opposition members feel must be examined by the Committee are: Sunil Mittal, son of late Satpal Mittal, who Mehta claims was present when he met the Prime Minister and handed over a suitcase containing Rs 67 lakh; Prime Minister's aide R.K. Kandeekar; Mohan Khandelwal, an employee of Harshad Mehta who reportedly told the CBI about the payoff as far back as June last year; Manmohan Sharma, secretary of Satpal Mittal; the drivers of the cars in which Mehta, his brother Ashwin Mehta, Sat Pal Mittal, Sunil Mittal and Sharma went to Rao's Race Course road residence on Nov 4 1991.

And above all, the Opposition members would insist that Prime Minister also be summoned as he must come clean on allegations made against him. Some members feel that Rao should be called after the examination of other witnesses.

BJP member in the JPC Harin Pathak on Monday urged JPC chairman Ram Niwas Mirdha to summon Mittal, Khandelwal, Kandeekar and Sharma. The BJP members are meeting on Tuesday morning to chalk out their strategy for the JPC meeting later in the day.

JPC chairman Ram Niwas Mirdha did not rule out summoning of more witnesses, and said that members are free to raise the issue. He said it was for the Committee to decide on the witnesses to be called before it.

However, the Committee is sharply divided on this issue. The Congress members, in a bid to bury the payoff issue which has caused considerable damage to the party's image, are likely to oppose the summoning of other witnesses and the Prime Minister on the argument that the Big Bull had not provided any substantial evidence to prove his charge. But the Opposition members do not think so.

It may be recalled that Congress members had also tried to keep Harshad Mehta away from the Committee but their efforts were foiled by determined Opposition members. The Big Bull then appeared before the JPC on June 30.

Sources in the Committee say that Congress members are also likely to take up shortage of time as another excuse for keeping away the Prime Minister and other key persons from the JPC. The Committee is to submit its final report during the first week of the Parliament session which begins on July 26.

However, Opposition members feel that the probe by the JPC should not be ended just because time was running out since the political nexus in the scam was now emerging and the Committee should seek extension if the need arises. Said a prominent JPC member: "The Committee should not leave its task half-way through. The scam should be fully exposed."

Meanwhile, Congress members have already begun their moves to dilute the draft report which has caused considerable embarrassment to the government. Congress members Murli Deora, Mani Shankar Aiyer, V. Raju and BJP member Yashwant Sinha have submitted their amendments to the draft report.

### **Congress (I) Said Unaware of Impending Downfall**

93AS1042D Varanasi AJ in Hindi 7 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Raj Kumar: "Congress Does Not Understand its Perilous Mentality"]

[Text] This is an amazing development; it really is an amazing development. The Congress Party is being attacked more and more ferociously. What about the Congress? It looks like it has been shell-shocked. It cannot think of doing anything but passing resolutions. Obviously, in a situation where there is this major challenge and when culture is being destroyed, the passing of resolutions cannot stop all this. These resolutions are passed by a handful of leaders, most of whom are worried about saving their seats of power. Because they are not committed to reaching any goal anywhere, they cannot give anything to the workers at the block, city, and district level, let alone to the millions of people out there. Their field workers have also become inactive. They drank water from the politics of reservation and quotas, and it is impossible for them to rid themselves of the habit of looking to someone in power for support. This weakness is clearly evident in this battle.

The unpardonable criminal involved in the 50 billion rupee scandal is dancing on the heads of the Congress Party like a major question. Still, Congress workers at the city and district levels could not attack him effectively. Let us forget the talk about attacking him; they did not even think it necessary to censure him. It would be more appropriate to say that they totally lack the common sense necessary to deal with such a situation. This is not surprising at all. In a political party where name-dropping is more important than elections, only slick talkers, sycophants, and yes-men type of workers can prosper. This has characterized the last 20 years of the Congress Party's history. The results are in front of us. Whatever the leaders say, the parrots repeat them, and the workers do not come forward at all. The leaders who have such a crowd of people behind them cannot make progress toward their goal simply by passing all those resolutions, which are nothing more than useless ink on paper.

Does any Congress leader appear to be paying attention to this important question? The Congress leaders should stare back into the eyes of this question. That is what will help the Congress Party, and it is what will happen to the people in the party. They cannot escape this plight without doing so, and this plight is sticking to the Congress Party like a leech. Ignoring this fact would be treachery against the country. Millions of people in India are being forced onto this path that leads to a leprous mentality that teaches them to consider even a criminal who would compromise their nation and society to attain their goals. If this mentality overpowers them, and the gangsters, thieves, and robbers will overwhelm our society. The shameless weapon that Harshad Mehta used will be considered unique, and will be used by them all. Perhaps then those leaders who are demanding Rao's resignation will not be able to protect themselves either. Common sense will become rare, and will be looked down upon with despire.

The catastrophe our country is facing basically is not political, but cultural. The people's mentality is changing dangerously. They are not in the mood to accept the difference between inefficient criminals, the government system, and political institutions. They are developing a tendency of putting all the former defects of the government and the shameless crimes of the criminals on the same side of the scale. Corruption is being given more importance than the refusal of a cultured man. Not only the people, but even well-known leaders, are not above this mentality. They do not hesitate at all to give the color of selfish politics to the report presented by the parliamentary investigation committee looking into the inefficiency of the ministers.

The Public Industries Commission was formed to monitor economic restrictions. There is also the Auditing Committee, as well as the Comptroller and the Auditor General. All of these are under the Parliament. Parliament has the highest level of rights. In spite of all this, if the corruption of the ministers is not brought to light and they are not kept under control, then we have no

alternative but to accept the fact that the present government system is not successful. This should be a subject of serious concern. However, the leaders who are hungry for positions of power do not let this happen. Such apathy over the future of the whole nation and the existence of democracy clearly indicates serious cultural decadence. Only an enlightened group can alert the people about it. Unfortunately, it is not as vocal as it should be. The tendency to take things easy does not allow this group to become stimulated and active. It does not matter how much we look at it or use wealth out of logic and criteria; it would be clear that instead of asking the prime minister to resign, we should pay more attention to weaknesses in the area of thinking.

Because of the vacuum created by a lack of healthy political activities, degenerative, opportunist, emotional, and conservative powers are raising their heads. This is a natural process. When there is a vacuum, such powers find an easy opportunity to expand, and spread the poison of fear religious crazes, and the caste system and the political thinking. That is what is happening now. It has endangered the system that can free millions of people and provide them protection, opportunities for progress, and freedom from problems and which our country has already accepted in its constitution. The danger monumental, and our actions are limited to passing resolutions. What can be more ridiculous than this situation?

Not only at organization level, but at the intellectual level, the role of the Congress Party is equally troubled. Its leaders have no other idea in their brains except to curse the leaders who encourage factionalism, repeating much-used insults, and preaching in a way that does not touch anyone's heart or mind. There is no one left in Congress who, because of his intellectual ability, is able to do something. The party is not trying to do anything to make its workers achieve anything. It is clear now that even though the Congress Party may be capable of maintaining its weak status on the political front, its failure at the cultural level is clear as daylight. The real problem is hinted by the cultural upheaval. The sooner the Congress leaders understand that in order to get rid of a poisonous insect in one's shoe, one has to shake the whole shoe to get rid of it. They and their party's waywardness will end soon.

### **Rao Move to Ban Religion From Politics Criticized**

*93AS1040 Varanasi AJ in Hindi 8 Jul 93 p 6*

[Editorial: "Religion, Politics and Ayodhya"]

[Text] Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, in his speech at a public meeting in Uttar Pradesh's industrial capital of Kanpur, emphasized two things. One was that the Central Government will give the confiscated land to a trust, in which only the religious will participate, and political leaders will not be permitted. In this context, he gave assurances that both a temple and a mosque will be

built in Ayodhya, and that this will not be managed by a political party. The second thing he mentioned was the government is committed to separating politics from religion, and that it will pass a major law soon. As far as the prime minister's announcement is concerned, all of our country's people want political leaders to not interfere in temple construction and to leave it to religious leaders. But who is at fault for not letting it happen until now? Even those with limited knowledge about Ayodhya know very well that when this issue was being discussed by the court, the politicians took over the whole issue. As a result, the court was pushed into the background. Even at that time, they said that the government should not take sides in a religious issue. However, the Congress Party at the Center saw a danger of its political influence diminishing. Meanwhile, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] increased its political influence using the temple issue, which worried all other parties. They all participated in this issue, and as a result, this issue became very complicated.

There can be no two opinions that if even today the Congress, the BJP, and other political parties and governments leave the Ayodhya issue alone, then it will not take much time to resolve it. These political parties and leaders should understand fully that the Ayodhya issue cannot be resolved by politics, and that this issue has become so enormous that it will not be resolved even by holding mid-term elections for vidhan sabhas and the Lok Sabha. No one will benefit by kicking this issue around for their vested interests and spreading an atmosphere of hatred and communal prejudice. What is necessary is that the issue related to Ayodhya that is being considered by the courts be resolved as soon as possible, and the question of temple and mosque construction be left to religious scholars. People often preach about keeping this issue out of politics; however, at the same time, by calling meetings of saints and holding yajnas, they also try to protect their political party's interests. If the prime minister repeated this message in Kanpur just for the sake of repetition, that is another issue. However, if that is not the case and he is really serious, then he must take some concrete steps to establish the credibility of the statement. The religious leaders are expected to come forward and cooperate in resolving this issue, which has become a challenge for our nation, and save the country from a religious civil war and put it on the path of prosperity by using their unlimited influence. Considering the sadhus, saints, and gurus affiliated to any political party only indicates one's narrow-mindedness. The fact is that the sadhus and saints do not belong to any one group. They are neither with the BJP nor do they have any dealings with the Congress Party. The government should insist that the religious gurus find a solution to the Ayodhya issue and leave it to them. Incidentally, the shankaracharyas [religious leaders] of the four piths [holy sites] have shown an interest in this issue for the first time. And in the statement they issued in Shringeri, they mentioned humanism, the Hindu religion, and their concern about the present situation in India. There can be no doubt that



all religions and sects should accept the path of Sanatana Dharma, and if they listen to the shankaracharyas, then the Ayodhya issue, which is stuck in political quicksand, could be resolved in no time.

The prime minister, in addition to discussing the Ayodhya issue, has talked about making a new law to separate religion from politics. This may not be impossible, but it appears to be very difficult. The Congress Party often accuses the BJP of representing the factionalism of the majority. Narasimha Rao has repeatedly criticized the BJP of inciting religious feeling to get votes. This is an issue over which the people cannot have total agreement. It has become a habit in our country to call some people secularist and others who incite the religious feelings of others. The fact is that there has never been a definition of factionalism or secularism. It is deplorable that our country's leaders have looked very narrowly at religion and secularism according to their own viewpoints, and have gradually used these wrongly. Practicing a religion or believing in a religion is not wrong; however, one must understand the in-depth meaning of religion. This would also remind people of the duty that, if there is an argument between the citizens, then it should not be used for political interests by giving it a religious color. In addition, there is another important aspect in this context that the people who are known to be without a religion also believe in something, and they should also be respected. However, they cannot be important just because of this fact. The word "secular" has also been argued about a lot. Corrupt practices in the name of secularism have been carried out in our country. In addition, we have passed many protectionist laws in the name of religions, factions, and castes. In this situation, we must study all these facets closely when we want to pass a law separating religion from politics.

#### **Fails to Understand Hindutva**

93AS1040B Varanasi AJ in Hindi 8 Jul 93 pp 1,7

[Article by AJ Reporter: Rao Failed to Understand the Shankaracharyas"]

[Text] New Delhi, 7 July—The prime minister made his agreement with the shankaracharya's Shringeri statement public and has given a new twist to the political chess game on the issue of Ayodhya. The government is willing to give the land to a non-political trust, and his announcement was part of this game.

It should be remembered that the prime minister played an important role in the shankaracharyas' meeting in Shringeri. He, himself, had asked Jayendar Saraswati, shankaracharya of Kanchi pith, to take the initiative in this direction. His special emissary had brought this message to Shringeri's Vidya Tirth [educational foundation] also. It was decided that there would be a meeting in Shringeri, to be followed by a joint statement. The prime minister's office had already told the shankaracharyas of his support. The opinion given by the shankaracharyas in their four-page statement was in the same

vein as P.V. Narasimha Rao's statement yesterday. The prime minister clearly repeated what the shankaracharyas hinted at in their statement. In other words, the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] should have nothing to do with the proposed trust.

Political observers assume that the prime minister, who was surrounded by the accusations levied by Harshad Mehta and was thinking about the imminent elections in four states, made this statement. The prime minister wants to present a picture so that the people have to choose from among the temple, the VHP, the BJP, and the RSS. The prime minister is presently looking at it purely as an election issue. That is why he did not discuss any practical or technical problems that are tying the government's hands in yesterday's statement. Nischalanand, the shankaracharya of Puri, changed his tone after the Shringeri statement. He also held a press conference for the VHP in New Delhi. Puri's shankaracharya is willing to work with Swami Vamdev and Ashok Singhal. The shankaracharyas are meeting on 24 October in Haridwar to discuss the structure of the proposed trust. The shankaracharya of Puri wants the temple to be built at Garabhgarah, and the mosque outside of Ayodhya's religious site. However, the other shankaracharyas, who were part of the joint statement, were silent on this point.

The prime minister clarified yesterday by openly mentioning Ashok Singhal and Lal Krishna Advani, saying that they must be kept out of the temple issue. However, Puri's shankaracharya says that Ashok Singhal can participate in the 24 October meeting, to be held in Haridwar. The VHP strategists believe that no religious leader will compromise with the government over the Garabhgarah [shrine] site or the issue of building the mosque outside of Panch Kosi and compromise his credibility. The whole strategy of the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] rests on this point.

The VHP has clarified that it agrees with the shankaracharyas' statement; however, the shankaracharyas should declare the land under Parisar as belonging to Ram Janambhumi Parisar, and it should issue specific sites for building the temple and the mosque. The VHP strategy is to avoid confrontations with shankaracharyas and to get the government trapped over these two issues.

The RSS family and the VHP are confident that the Narasimha Rao government is not in a position to make any statements on these two issues. First is the issue of the Supreme Court's working on the case, and the second is the issue of minorities. The third issue is the presidential directive about confiscating the land. These three situations prevent the government from making any clear statements.

**Separatism Said Growing in Meghalaya***93AS09991 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English  
9 Jul 93 p 5*

[Article by Sudipta Bhattacharjee: "Separatists Gain Ground in Meghalaya"]

[Text] Shillong, July 8—Separatist forces are raising their heads in Meghalaya, so long an oasis in the insurgency-ridden northeast.

While the Garo National Council (GNC) has now intensified its call for a "Garo Pahar" state, the Khasis are not to be left behind with their demand for a "Khasiland."

In recent weeks, graffiti appearing at prominent city junctions include slogans like "This is Khasiland, not India." Considering the largesse the state receives from the Centre, the writing on the wall has raised more than a few eyebrows.

The Garo-Khasi tussle over employment quotas—40 per cent for each community—has snowballed over the past few months with the Khasis advocating a cut in the reservation limit for Garos since there are less than the required number of qualified applicants among the latter.

Taking advantage of the situation, disgruntled politicians are using the separatist plank to gain a foothold in the state's administrative machinery. In fact, the GNC has already submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, maintaining that "the events subsequent to the creation of Meghalaya [have] led the people of the Garo Hills to an irrevocable conclusion that their protection, preservation, future and progress lie only in the creation of a separate state of their own."

The memorandum also states that the employment policy formulated by the first chief minister of Meghalaya, Captain W.A. Sangma, reserving 40 per cent of the jobs for Khasis and an equal number for the Garos, was not being adhered to.

The GNC is also apprehensive that in the long run "differences among the ethnic tribes may crop up" on the basis of individual dialects as well. It also blames the lack of proper educational infrastructure which reflects itself in the poor record of Garos in competitive examinations and which has led to frustration among the younger generation.

The present champion of the Garo statehood cause, Mr Clifford Marak, a former member of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, was quoted as having said that in the absence of enough qualified Garos to fill the 40 per cent quota, "the posts should be saved by giving employment through contracts."

Khasi students, already bristling under the quota system, are now demanding that 90 per cent seats be reserved for

the Khasis and Garos together. With rising unemployment the educated Khasis, emerging out of Shillong's sundry premier institutions, are now pressing the state government, with a Garo chief minister at the helm, to accede to their demands.

The Khasi Students Union categorically stated that they had welcomed the GNC's demand for a separate state.

The Garo Hills lie in a highly remote area from the state capital. To reach it one has to travel through Assam. The GNC is confident that a separate Garo state will not prove to be a burden on the Centre since the region "is bestowed with enormous natural and mineral resources. In addition to this, to attract domestic and foreign tourists and scholars, we are also proud of having two national parks—Balpakram and the Nokrek Gene Sanctuary."

In fact, the ministry of civil aviation has just cleared the Rs 2.5-crore Tura airport project which would enable the Garo Hills easy accessibility from other parts of the country. Clearance for the project had been pending for six years with the National Airports Authority expressing doubts about the viability of the airstrip given Tura's hilly surroundings and air pockets. It was only sustained lobbying by the Union labour minister, Mr P.A. Sangma, which forced the Centre to clear the project.

Earlier, there were no slogans barring those stating that Khasiland was not part of India. Now there are derogatory comments aplenty about the "Raos and Advanis" who are "out to destroy this beautiful place" by mining uranium and so on.

**Congress Leaders Said Unhappy With Mamata's Bengal Line***93AS1034C Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in Bengali 9 Jul 93 p 4*

[Editorial: "Mamata's Bengal Line"]

[Text] It is difficult to say how concerned the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] is about Mamata Bandyopadhyay's "Bengal Line," but some stones had been thrown to many small beehives of the Congress Party. It is quite understandable from the angry remarks of the leaders belonging to different tiers of the state Congress Party. Subrata Mukhopadhyay is angry, because the Mamata group organized the 1 July Committee to protect the interests of labor from the aggressive nature of CITU [Center of Indian Trade Unions]. The Mamata group complained against the inaction of the state unit of INTUC [Indian National Trade Union Congress], the leader of which is Mr. Mukhopadhyay himself. So, the president of INTUC Subrata can ask this question to Mamata—"Why did you come to my arena?" But it does not seem that Mamata is very willing to answer that question. The state Congress President Somen Mitra is unhappy, because Mamata's criticism is directed against the party's official policy and especially

against the indifferent leadership and lack of efforts of the state leadership. The people of the state have plenty of complaints against the leftist government and Congress must come forward to give them strong leadership. Common people still have faith in the Congress. But where is the demonstration of united efforts to qualify for that trust? In short, Mamata's group's clear message in the present state leadership is a failure to perform the duties of the main opposition party. How Somen Mitra would be happy in that case?

Many of the central leadership are not happy with this former central minister. If the basis of Mamata's popularity was not that strong, actions would have been taken to shut her up a long time ago. Her ability to maintain her image makes her presence more awkward to many leaders. But very recently, her "Bengal Line" has become a cause of concern to many Congress leaders. At the same time, there is some anxiety regarding the coming election for the Upper House of Parliament from West Bengal and especially for the election of central Commerce Minister Pranab Mukhopadhyay, who, at present, does not have any seat in the Parliament. If all the 42 Congress members and Jharkhand Party's Naren Hansda of the state assembly support him, then his victory is certain. And there lies the anxiety. Will all the Congress members cast their votes according to the party line, or, will they do something else? The simple matter is that some are trying to raise the question of whether the members of the Mamata group will cast their vote on the basis of conscience and thereby cause the defeat of Pranab Mukhopadhyay. The issue has become such that, if the Congress candidate is defeated, it would be taken that Mamata had a role behind that. This assumes no possibility that other members would betray the commerce minister, who is a very trusted person of the prime minister, in accordance with the high ideal of inner party conflict within Congress party. Besides, what will Mamata gain by defeating a heavy weight minister like Pranab? Only the CPM will benefit from this. If they could get their fifth candidate elected, their party glory would increase and that could give a shock to the Central Government. In the game of politics, it will be a big advantage. The other partners of the front who have started to shout after the panchayet election, will also become speechless. That is also not a negligible factor.

One thing is clear about 'Bengal Line.' Mamata wants to organize a very strong movement in this state against the left front government and its most powerful partner the CPM. She thinks that the people of the state are frustrated with the activities of the left front government. The people are in a fearful condition due to the atrocities and attacks of the arrogant and unruly party cadre regiment. It is possible to oust the left front from power by organizing a strong movement. There is no lack of courageous and idealist young Congress workers in the state. What is really missing is a strong leadership. It means, the field is ready, the workers are determined, but the leadership is weak. It seems that the state and the central leadership are suffering from hesitancy. It

appears that a policy had been made to appease the left front government, and it is the first task to appease the chief minister, Jyoti Basu. It is true that the help of the leftists are needed to run a minority government in the center. But for that reason, the West Bengal state Congress Party has to be undermined. Not only in West Bengal, but the grassroots workers of the Congress in the states of Tamil Nadu, Bihar, and Orissa are suffering from some type of frustration. In order to achieve the friendship of the non-Congress governments of these states, the Congress organizations of those states are paralyzed. Who will benefit in the end? The supporters of the Bengal Line are trying to draw the attention of the highest leadership to this aspect of the matter. There is no reason to believe that they want to weaken the party.

#### **Government Policy on Kashmir Seen Indecisive, Incomplete**

93AS1034B Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in Bengali 10 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Sunit Ghosh: "The Hesitancy and Worry That Forms the Basis of the Government's Kashmir Policy is Transparently Clear"]

[Text] Professor Soge is very angry. It has been said that in his recent visit to India, the Israeli foreign minister, Shimon Peres, gave some advice to the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader Lal Krishna Advani about a permanent solution to the Kashmir problem. According to the allegation of Mr. Soge, Mr. Peres placed importance on the change of demography in the Kashmir valley. This made Mr. Soge angry. He threatened that a dangerous situation would emerge if any such attempt is made by the Government of India.

Prof. Soge is not a well-known person in Kashmir politics. He had a seat in the Parliament for some years as a member of the National Convention after flattering Faruk Abdullah. Now, without being a member of the Parliament, he is living in the capital enjoying all the facilities, including government housing. He never mentions returning to Kashmir for fear of the militants. Once his daughter was kidnapped by the militants. At that time, there was no mark of a sign of anxiety or worry in his face. After a few days, the kidnappers freed his daughter. It has been heard that the whole thing was a plot. With a drama of kidnapping, pressure was put on the Government of India to release some arrested militants who were close to the Soge family. Mr. Soge, however, denied this charge. But after that incident, Mr. Soge has not gone to his own state that often. With the support of the Government of India, he started to live permanently in New Delhi.

But Mr. Soge is very worried with Kashmir. This worry increases whenever the official of Delhi decides to take any kind of firm action against the separatists, or, whenever someone raises the demand of the abolition of Article 370 of the Constitution and talks about the change in character of the population of the Kashmir



valley. Because, if those are done, the vested interests of Soges would be in danger. So, when a Kashmiri leader such as he protested against the Israeli foreign minister, the home minister of the Government of India, which is habituated to appeasing the minorities, issued a statement to assure the group of Soges that the government does not have any such intention. In spite of having no confirmation from BJP sources that the Israeli foreign minister gave any such advice to change the demography, the all-knowing CPM leader, Sitaram Yechuri, discovered a kind of "wickedness" in this type of conversation.

It is not known what actually the Israeli foreign minister said, or, whether he at all said anything about the demographic change. No doubt, they are very experienced about this kind of thing. By settling some hundred thousand Jews in the occupied West Bank of the Jordan river, they have changed the demography of the area completely. The numerical majority of the Arabs in that region is now very thin. By doing this, they are able to weaken the main bases of the Arab terrorists. In the light of their experience, there is no inconsistency in advising that the demography in the Kashmir valley be changed.

Israel could be criticized for other reasons. After defeating the Arab invaders, the way they have changed the demography of the "West Bank" cannot be supported completely. Though they did it in the interest of their existence, otherwise, during this time the Arabs could have made their lives hell. But the situation of Kashmir is different. Kashmir is an integrated part of India. Kashmir cannot be compared with the "West Bank." In spite of being an integrated part, only the Kashmiris have the right to live in Kashmir permanently. In the Constitution of independent India, every citizen has been given the basic right to purchase property and to live anywhere in India with the exception of a few places. And Kashmir is one of those few places. The reasons for which this exception was made for the places where the tribal people live, those reasons cannot be applicable for Kashmir. After the inclusion of Kashmir with India, if the people of other parts of India were given the right to purchase land and property in Kashmir and to live there permanently, then with the change of demography of the region, the problems could have been solved. But the rulers of independent India, instead of taking this right action, granted this state a special status by incorporating it into Article 370 in the Constitution. This they have done to appease the minorities. Now, the present rulers of New Delhi realize how dangerous the results have become. The 99 percent of the Muslim majority of the valley is now anti-India. They do not consider India their own country. Their atrocities forced the Hindu minority pundits to leave their homes bag and baggage and to live in the refugee shelters in Jammu year after year. Until now the Government of India has failed to create a situation where these people could return to their homes. After the departure of the Hindu pundits from that region, nothing is left of the spirit of secularism over there. Our great Government of

India is still hesitant to take any stern action in Kashmir in the name of secularism, which does not exist there anymore. The government of Narasimha Rao cannot solely be blamed for this. He inherited it from his political predecessors. They could never take any definite policy toward Kashmir. Their unclear thinking, short-sighted policy, and their weakness toward the extremely corrupted Sheikh Abdullah family made the Kashmir problem more complicated. Since its very inception in 1947, the Government of India's policy toward Kashmir has been marked by vacillation, hesitancy, and unclear thoughts. On the one hand, they shout that Kashmir is an integral part of India and it is out of any kind debate or dispute; on the other hand, by allowing the UN observers into Srinagar, they indirectly agree that Kashmir is still a disputed case under the UN. When the speaker of the Pakistani Parliament, Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, refuses to agree that Kashmir is a part of India, or, the Muslim leader of the IOC [Indian Oil Corporation] raises questions about Kashmir in the UN, New Delhi immediately launches vehement protests. But from an indifferent standpoint, this protest seems to be meaningless, because Kashmir is no more an integrated state. "Azad Kashmir" on the other side of the border will never be a part of India. The Government of India, by granting special constitutional privileges to the portion that is within India, has virtually given it a status of almost a different state. Kashmir has a separate constitution; the Kashmiris' citizenship is different; Kashmir has a separate flag. No other state in India, including those states that enjoy some special constitutional privileges, has anything like this. If the Muslim majority of Kashmir says that they are not Indian and the Indian laws are not applicable there, or, any Pakistani leader says that Kashmir is not a part of India, or, the leaders of the Islamic states raise the Kashmir issue in the UN—can they be blamed? Today, is the Kashmir valley a real part of India? When the Indian Government's rule is limited from the Governor's House to the secretariat in the city of Srinagar, and the administration of the rest of the state runs with the dictations of the separatists, should it be said that the particular state is an integral part of India? The farsighted leader Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee realized that one day such a situation will arise in Kashmir. So, he declared that "two kinds of rule, two premiers and two flags" cannot run in one state. Being afraid of that slogan, Sheikh Abdullah, having indirect indulgence from his friend Jawaharlal Nehru, arrested Shyama Prasad. Due to the lack of good medical treatment, Shyama Prasad died in jail in Kashmir on 23 June 1953.

After winning the election in 1952, when Sheikh Abdullah declared with vanity that "We are fully sovereign and we are out of the jurisdiction of the Indian parliament of any other" and insisted that "Kashmir should have a separate head of state, separate constitution, and separate flag," Shyama Prasad immediately protested and warned the nation—"A two-nation theory has divided the country, and now, Sheikh Abdullah wants to introduce a three-nation theory." He wrote to

Nehru in his letter of 3 February 1953—"It is my request to you that you please think with a cool brain about where your inability to stand against Muslim communalism is driving the nation." Shyama Prasad is no more. But the people of India now can realize the truth of what he said.

Now, what is to be done? Before searching for the answer to this question, it should be known that whether the administrators of India really think Kashmir is an integral part of India? If they think so, then three things should be said in answer to that question. First, Article 370 should be abolished from the Constitution. Second, the doors of Kashmir should be opened to all the citizens of the nation, and thereby, a change in the character of the population should be made. Third, without thinking of beginning a political process over there, the army should be deployed over Kashmir to root out the separatists, disregarding the shouts of the human rights activists. There is no other way to keep Kashmir within India.

#### **Mamata Banerjee Following Said Growing, Further Growth Forecast**

93AS1034A Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in Bengali 11 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Debashish Bhattacharya: "Mamata's Followers Will Increase, Not Decrease, in Order To Increase Delhi's Pressure on Jyoti Basu"]

[Text] Mamata Babdyopadhyaya is again in the center of a debate. It is reported that her "Bengal Line" document has not only raised a storm in the state Congress party, but also in the AICC [All India Congress Committee]. It is clear from the conversations of Somen Mitra and V.N. Gadgil. It is normal to raise questions about what Mamata actually means by "Bengal Line," and why her opponents are not willing to accept it. In fact, those questions are already raised. At the same time, the most meaningful question has emerged—whether Mamata is really trying to break away from the Congress?

Let us analyze these questions and possibilities one by one.

The first question is Mamata's about "Bengal Line."

What Mamata said in releasing her "Bengal Line" has no apparent inconsistency with the ideals and political thesis of the Congress Party and especially the unity of the state party in West Bengal. In this state, Congress has to fight against the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and to launch a movement against "the terror and misrule" of the Left Front under Jyoti Basu—can any Congress leader in West Bengal deny this thesis, at least, openly? Certainly not. The Congress leaders, who secretly had sold themselves to CPM, also claim in their formal statements that movement against CPM and Jyoti Basu is the primary political program of the party. This had been uttered by many leaders of the state

Congress that even if the so-called Congress High Command (according to Somen Mitra, the term is a coinage of the newspapers) wants to restrain the movement against CPM in West Bengal, it would not be agreed upon. Above all, the different and special situation of West Bengal has been explained to the central leadership by Somen Mitra, the president of the state Congress. In that case, it is really difficult to understand where the difference is between Mamata's "Bengal Line" and the thoughts of the other Congress leaders.

It has been said from within Congress that Mamata's "Bengal Line" would encourage communalism and regional politics. Recently, it has become a practice to link Mamata's name with communalism. In the simple term, what they are trying to say is Mamata is leaning toward the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and she could even join that party soon. Let us now discuss this matter for a while.

It is better to say at the beginning that whether Mamata will join the BJP or whether she will come to an understanding with the BJP—all these issues could be answered only by Mamata herself or by the leadership of the E.P. We can only reach for a possibility by analyzing the existing political situation.

If we start with the thesis that Mamata can join the BJP, then the first thing that should be taken into consideration is why should she? Mamata is a member of the Parliament. She was a minister in the Central Government. But, in spite of that, she has not yet fit herself into the politics of all of India. Rather, she has firmly embraced the politics of West Bengal as her main field of work. After this year's panchayet election, it has been proved again that Congress is the only alternative in West Bengal to fight against the CPM. It is true that the BJP has gotten some footings in the village area after the panchayet election. The time has come to become alert about the "danger" of the BJP. But though it was said that the BJP is the rising force in West Bengal as an alternative to Congress, in reality, BJP has failed to achieve one-fourth of the success of that propaganda. It means, the people of this state still count Congress as an acceptable alternative in the fight against the CPM. Under the circumstances, why would a popular leader like Mamata quit the Congress to join the BJP to launch an anti-CPM movement in West Bengal? If the reality is that the BJP has become almost equal to Congress in its strength, then this kind of consideration could have some meaning. Under the present circumstances, Mamata would not at all benefit from joining the BJP. Naturally, it does not seem that she would make a rash decision like this.

Second, in the political calculation of national politics, if Mamata wants to come to an understanding with either Narasimha Rao's or Arjun Singh's group, she has to go against the BJP in both the cases. It is now heard that being displeased with Narasimha Rao for many reasons, Mamata wants to remain close to Arjun Singh. If that is

true, going against the BJP would be the primary condition for that closeness. In that case, where is her chance to tilt toward the BJP? It should be pointed out that at the time of releasing the document of the "Bengal Line," some reporters asked her about the possibility of any understanding with the BJP. Mamata answered, "It is written in the beginning of the document that communal harmony is our path. The BJP's politics is linked with religion. There can be no cooperation with them."

Over all, the situation has reached a point that allegations and counter-allegations have widened to a scale where a logical approach has nothing to do with. Certainly, two parties are needed to start a quarrel. Mamata has also responsibility for the continuation of sectarian conflict within the Congress. As she is more popular than any other Congress leader of the state, and as any of her program can make a mark, Mamata has started to suffer from a kind self vanity. She can even deny the necessity to come out of it when needed. The situation is, therefore, more complicated. On the other hand, those who oppose Mamata, such as, Somen Mitra and the other leaders, cannot accept Mamata's popularity easily. Since they could not do that, they do not hesitate to foil any program proposed by Mamata, or to betray her from behind, or to speak bitterly against her. So, Somen Mitra might not have gotten time to look at the "Bengal Line" document, but there were other people to lodge a complaint to AICC against the document.

The hearing power of the spokesman of the AICC, Mr. Gadgil, is not very sharp. Still, at the time of answering many questions from the journalists about the "Bengal Line," he could not speak clearly about it, and finally, did cast some reflection on Mamata. But when Mamata called him from Calcutta on Monday night, the same person confessed to her that he did not know the matter in detail. There is nothing wrong to start a movement against the CPI [Communist Party of India]. I read in the newspaper that Somen Mitra also asked why there should be any objection for a movement against the CPM? The only objection is in the name of "Bengal Line." But the reason for the undeclared objection is that the movement was called by Mamata.

Mamata is the president of the state Youth Congress. She may not hold this post tomorrow. Today, she is not a minister. Tomorrow, she could again be a minister in the Central Government. This kind of thing happens very often in a party like the Congress. But the point is, as long as Mamata will hold her popularity and following of common people and Congress workers, no Narasimha Rao or Arjun Singh, or Gadgil or Somen Mitra will take on the risk of taking any action against her. For those who are rushing to Delhi today to complain against the "Bengal Line," Delhi might explain to them tomorrow how important the "Bengal Line" is. Now it is also important for prime minister Narasimha Rao to keep Jyoti Basu under little pressure. At this moment, therefore, Mamata's importance to New Delhi will increase and not decrease.

### Plight of Kashmiri Hindu Refugees Recounted

93AS10331 New Delhi ORGANISER in English  
11 Jul 93 p 7

[Article by S. Neogi: "Plight of Kashmiri Migrants"]

[Text] "They have left me completely shattered and penniless; robbed of whatever I had built up with the sweat of my brow. Once upon a time I used to dine and wine with them, and now they have done this to me. History will never forgive them," recalls Vineet Kaul, a man in his mid-forties. A few years ago proprietor of a hotel, owning an orchid [as published], he now lives the life of a refugee in one of the dingy refugee camps in South Delhi.

"My only daughter has to lead the life of a widow for the rest of her life. They killed her husband, when he was returning from his office, just after a month of their marriage," narrates Sunil Mizra pointing to his daughter sitting beside him. He is unable to control his emotions.

"I am a gold medalist in Economics and was a prospective candidate for the I.A.S. [Indian Administrative Service]. Now I am running from pillar to post begging for a job just to eke out a living so that I can live with dignity. Prospective employers suspect my credentials, as I could not carry my certificates with me when I fled," laments Sharad Raina a young boy in his mid-twenties and already frustrated.

"My parents and my two elder sisters and I were going to Jammu for shopping for my eldest sister's marriage. Some militants stopped us midway, dragged everybody out of the vehicle and before we could understand what was happening they shot dead my mother and my eldest sister. I was also shot at but escaped with an injury. My father and my younger sister brought me to Jammu and I was hospitalised for two months." This is the tragic story of Kamlesh Kaul.

This is not melodramatic fiction. These are statements of facts describing the tragedy of innocent Kashmiri migrants in Delhi. It is their anguish, their deprivation, their frustration and their shattered dreams. They had to leave their home and heart and seek refuge wherever they could. Once living in a sprawling 2500 sq.ft. bungalow with all modern amenities and comforts with servants at their beck and call they now lead a life of refugees. They have to survive on the meagre government allowance and the inadequate rations. They share a cramped dormitory with other 15-20 families. A flimsy curtain takes care of their privacy.

Kashmir, once called the paradise on earth, no more attracts tourists. The situation worsened after 1989 when the Muslims in the Valley suddenly took to indiscriminate shooting down of Hindus. Their target was mainly the males of the age group 18-25 years. It is this age group which usually stands by nationalism and do not mind proving their worth at the cost of their lives. The militants' objective was to finish off this group which



had the potential to resist them. Pamphlets were openly distributed and put up in main thoroughfares mentioning the target list. They also advertised in the local Urdu dailies.

Requesting anonymity, a widower migrant narrated his tragic story with uncontrolled emotion. "One chilly winter night in November at around 9, five militants in complete black dress and masked face, barged into my house. My daughter was watching the TV and my wife and I were helping each other in preparing dinner. Without a word, they caught hold of my daughter and carried her off. When I tried to resist they held me at gun point. When my daughter and wife raised an alarm they immediately shot them down and ordered me to run. I was left petrified. I was not even able to see my beloved wife and daughter for the last time—it all happened in front of my eyes."

There is no end to the tragic stories of Kashmiri Hindus who constituted 10 per cent of the population of Kashmir. Majority of the families had to flee their homes leaving behind everything. They had to quit their homes on pain of death with whatever they had on. They preferred to flee at the dead of night, when none could recognise them. They hiked several lifts and walked miles and miles in search of a safer place. Mostly the old and the invalid had to stay back as they could not brave the treacherous trek. The first stop for everyone was Jammu.

"Jammu, although safe, was not dependable and so we ten families decided to come down to Delhi," describes another migrant. He further added, "initially we had great hardship in the Capital." As the hotelier, unwilling to be identified by name, narrates his story: "We fourteen people, six among us being women from three families, at night used to sleep in the New Delhi Railway Station and during daytime wandered from place to place to find some accommodation to rest our head. Then we came across this camp and since then we are here."

Most of the migrants had to leave behind all their belongings and they fled without any cash. They had to stay in the capital at different places, till after much awaiting the Delhi Administration came up with the refugee camps, in various community centres. A meagre sum of Rs. 125 per adult member and an inadequate ration is provided to them.

The migrants are put to a severe test in Delhi. Those lucky ones who could bring back something from their home and with support from friends and relatives, are better off. The unfortunate ones have to gruel in unhygienic conditions, adverse climate, bleak employment prospects and have to face sceptical response from prospective employers. "Government aid is just for name's sake and is but a pinch of salt. Relief flows from some associations and organisations of Kashmiri Hindu migrants, but that is too erratic.

## Effect of 'Bengal Line' on State, National Politics Viewed

### Congress Leadership Worried

93AS1068A Calcutta BARTAMAN (Supplement)  
in Bengali 11 Jul 93 pp 1

[Article by Jayanta Ghoshal: "Mamata's Battle Success in Bengal Politics"]

[Text] It happened some years ago, possibly in 1988. Mamata Banerjee, the leader of the West Bengal Yuva [youth] Congress, was living at that time at 92 North Avenue in Delhi. This was the first term for Mamata as a member of parliament. Somen Mitra [current president of the West Bengal State Congress Party] was then the secretary of the state Congress Party and he was visiting Delhi for a couple of days. It was suddenly decided that there would be a picnic at Mamata's place. Somen said: "Mamata, I am going to buy fish and you will cook." Mamata replied: "Okay, let there be a picnic today." Everything started at once. Somen declared that no other person, but he would go to buy fish because "the person who loves to eat fish also likes to buy fish. But there are a lot of problems in going to the fish market in morning hours at Ahmarst Street [in Calcutta], over here I will go to the fish market at the Chittaranjan Park and buy fish."

There are many inconveniences for politicians. They cannot go to buy fish at their own sweet will [to their known market] because at the market hundreds of people will surround them. Therefore, Somen Mitra bought several types of fish without any botheration from Chittaranjan Park [where he was unknown] that afternoon. Mamata cooks really well. She has a great interest in cooking and also has the hobby of feeding people with different types of experimental recipes. Therefore, Mamata cooked very happily on that day. She had a small dining table in her apartment and, since everyone could not be accommodated there, the picnic was held on a carpet in the living room after removing all the furniture. On that day there was no consideration for groups or parties; any one who was present in Delhi was invited. The theory was: if you are a good soul, you are welcome. Even the journalists were not excluded.

From 1988 to 1993 is quite a number of years, and within this period there was a lot of topsy-turvy in politics. Mamata was defeated in the Lok Sabha [lower house of parliament] election and won again in 1991 at the tenth parliamentary election. She became a [federal minister] and also resigned from it. Somen Mitra became the president of the state Congress Party. The mutual distance between them increased substantially—both were staying at two different poles. Maybe they did not forget the great fun they had at the picnic that night, but various changes in the politics also brought a radical change in their political equation. Somen and Mamata have now become two principal rivals in West Bengal.

What changes have come to Delhi's role in these past five years? I feel that in these five years Delhi has slowly become more and more dependent on the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist]. In 1988 when Rajiv Gandhi was the prime minister, the position of the Congress Party in the whole country was not good. Rajiv Gandhi's image as a "clean-man" was experiencing jolts and the opposition, especially the royal Vishwanath Pratap Singh [of Janata Party], was cornering him. Under the circumstances Rajiv also had to beg the Communists for support. Since Rajiv's time, a close relationship developed between Jyoti Basu's son Chandan Basu and Rajiv. It was not that Rajiv Gandhi asked as prime minister not to stage any agitation against the CPI-M, but at that time the situation also became such that it was not easy for the high command to take any anti-CPI-M stand, and since then started the "political black-mailing" by the Jyoti Basu group. Today when Mamata Banerjee is trying to build a militant agitation against the CPI-M and getting support from one district after the other, and when her popularity has reached its peak, it is also not becoming possible for Narasimha Rao to fan support for that agitation. The Congress high command is never saying—you should not stage any agitation against the CPI-M—but it is also not extending the hand of support in organizing it.

Under these circumstances, Mamata wants to stage agitation against the CPI-M. The agitation does not mean holding of only a few public meetings or blocking roads and rails. She wants to go in for a people's revolt. Today Mamata's objective is to oust the CPI-M from power in Bengal by hook or by crook with the support of the people. It is crystal clear to me that Delhi is now not at all eager to stage this Mamata agitation. Mamata Banerjee is the youngest among the top West Bengal Congress leaders. She is tremendously impulsive, brave, honest, and wears an informal middle-class image. That is why she also does not hesitate to go against Delhi. But the problem is that anti-CPI-M is not a Delhi "priority," and so with greater fuming from Mamata, the high command prefers to lean more and more to Jyoti Basu. Therefore, by organizing a fight against the CPI-M, Mamata's conflict started with the Congress high command. I do not agree with those persons who try to magnify Somen-Mamata rivalry in this equation, because I feel that Mamata's conflict is with Delhi and not with Somen Mitra, who is today the president of the state Congress Party. He is the chief of the official group. If any Tom-Dick-or-Harry were in Somen's place as the president today, he would also act to keep the high command happy. Or in other words, for some time now Somen has had to skillfully oppose more and more the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and not the CPI-M because that is the plan of action of the Congress Party. In this situation, if Somen starts a militant agitation against the CPI-M, then he joins Mamata's tune and declares a holy war against the high command. It will be a challenge to the prime minister, and that is not possible for Somen Mitra, because he has told me more than once in

exclusive interviews: "To challenge the central leadership of the Congress Party means to go against the party, and in that case one would morally have to leave the party. I refuse to leave the Congress Party for the sake of agitating against the CPI-M because no one, at least no one from Bengal, has been successful in his attempt to bring a counter-flow outside the main stream of the Congress Party. Therefore, why should I take such a big risk at this age. Moreover, I have so far done everything to hold the Congress Party, then why should I quit? Rather remaining inside the party, I will try to make the central leadership understand about the need for adopting an anti-CPI-M line. Without any criticism of the good intentions of Somen Mitra I will say: "My personal view is that within the near future it won't be possible to launch an agitation against the CPI-M by remaining inside the Congress Party because the high command won't allow it."

Once again I will talk about another old incident. Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi was then the federal commerce minister and the president of the state Congress Party. I have never heard one thing from any leader of those various Congress splinter groups, who loudly brought charges against Priya Ranjan, that he was a "watermelon leader" or in other words an agent of the CPI-M. When Priya Ranjan was the president of the state Congress Party the Roddon agitation was very successful. During the Roddon Square agitation, the police made a large-scale baton charge. At that time Somen Mitra joined the tune of Priya Ranjan, and as an aggrieved leader made a statement against the CPI-M. I still remember that it was a very stormy and rainy day and my journalist colleague Prabir Ghoshal was at the site during the trouble at the Roddon Square. When in the evening Prabir entered the office fully drenched, everyone heard from him the first hand account of the incident. On that day we could realize how much the general public was agitated against the Left Front. After that, Priya Ranjan wished to go further with the Roddon issue, and in protest blocked the Writer's [West Bengal government office] building. A "charge-sheet" against the chief minister for corruption was handed over to the government. The program on the blockade was also very successful. But within a few days Rajiv Gandhi, the then prime minister, in a statement said that "Jyoti Basu is not corrupt." I recall that this statement was published in a Calcutta English daily and it brought a great jolt to the whole agitation. Priya Ranjan was severely distressed, but was it possible for him on that day to openly say anything against Rajiv Gandhi? He went to Delhi and tried to express his grief to the Congress (I) leaders, but realized that it was good for nothing.

But it is not that all of a sudden Mamata Banerjee has today started an agitation against the CPI-M and put pressure on Delhi in order to protect "Bengal interests." Mamata, a girl from a lower-middle-class family of 30/B Harish Chatterjee Street, Kalighat, first became a member of the Lok Sabha in 1984. At that time she defeated a CPI-M leader like Somnath Chatterjee. After

coming to the Lok Sabha she practically daily raised questions on the CPI-M at zero hour. Sitting in the Parliament Rajiv Gandhi used to enjoy this anti-CPI-M attitude of Mamata. Whatever might be his understandings with Jyoti Basu, he had a special affection for her. He never became an obstacle to Mamata's militant opposition to the CPI-M. Rajiv gave importance to Mamata and approved the committee proposed by her. She also became the president of Juva Congress at the request of Rajiv Gandhi. At that time too Mamata used to declare holy war against Delhi on the issues of Bengal's development sometimes inside and sometimes outside of parliament. However, during that time no one ever raised any question, like whether Mamata was going to quit the party. Here I recall an incident. Mamata made a decision that she would hold a sit-in strike in front of the room of the then federal minister, Vengalrao, when he did not take any step on an issue raised several times in the Parliament. Vengalrao tried to persuade Mamata not [to] do such a thing, but she did not pay any heed. Along with a few of her followers she went to the Ministry of Industry in the early morning hours and started her sit-in strike in front of the doors of federal industries minister Vengalrao's room. The issue on that day was the woeful condition of the factories of the Metal Box and other industries [in West Bengal]. However, with great difficulty after accepting several demands, Vengalrao was able to end Mamata's sit-in strike.

Therefore, Mamata's pursuing of anti-Delhi line on the development issues of Bengal is not an unexpected event. This is Mamata's own style of doing politics. She became a federal minister after coming to Delhi but then too she never made herself busy with national politics. Mamata has always felt that Delhi's politics is not her cup of tea and, therefore, when she entered the first day into the Shastri Bhawan as the federal minister of sports she said immediately after sitting on the chair in an air-conditioned room: 'It seems that I am being suffocated. Just see where they have encaged me'. However, finally she came out of that cage. Those who do politics—however big enemy they might be to Mamata—must admit that it is not a trifle thing for a politician to give up the position of a minister. Mamata has only one goal—the Bengal politics, and there lies her battle-blood-success.

But there is a heaven and hell difference between the day Mamata held her sit-in in front of Vengalrao's office and today because a big difference exists in the Congress Party of that time under Rajiv Gandhi and Narasimha Rao's Congress today. After the fall of Rajiv Gandhi, coalition governments—a brief period of Vishwanath Pratap Singh, followed by Chandra Shekhar and finally Narasimha Rao—have come into being in Indian politics. But during this period the strength of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has increased tremendously. After the allegation made that Harshad Mehta gave 10 million rupees [to Narasimha Rao], the objective of the high command has become to somehow save the government. It has no headache with all other things like

whether or not Congress remains in West Bengal or the CPI-M is removed from power there.

Mamata is very young and she is the representative of the younger generation. I have seen in a book on Parliament that her age is 38. In 1970, she became the general secretary of the Women's Congress, but her real politics started in 1984 after defeating Somnath Chatterjee in the election. Once blessed with the affection of student leader Subrata Mukherjee, Mamata has created her own position in the state politics with her devotion, honesty, and sincerity. And today there are so many discussions, allegations, and complaints with the same Mamata. Lots of discussions and debates are being held on issues like whether or not her Bengal line or setting up of a counter-trade union are correct. The thing is that Mamata is not that tactful, because she is impulsive. When she wakes up in the night she perhaps sees the nightmare of Jyoti Basu. She wants to oust the Left Front government from power immediately.

Just reaching this point we stop abruptly. Will Mamata be able to dismiss this government? The bigger question is: will she be able to do it remaining in the Congress Party? Mamata is a personality. At her call many people will come today from the villages of Bengal and stand by her side. But if Delhi does not want that thing and constantly pulls her back, and also makes efforts to bring her to Delhi as a federal minister, then what will Mamata do? How can she advance without organizational support? There will be rigging and a reign of terror during the elections. Delhi will remain sitting like a puppet year after year and some among the state Congress leadership might work as spies to the CPI-M. Under that situation will it be possible for Mamata to oust Jyoti Basu from the Writer's Building only with the strength of the people? The businessmen and even the big corporate houses in the state want Jyoti Basu's government to remain in power. If Congress comes to power, it will have to satisfy 200 persons. But still now they bow only at one principal place and, that is, to Mr. Jyoti Basu. Is the field ready to break this firm "system" or, in other words, to start a dreadful "anti-system" agitation? There is no doubt that Bengal has turned into a mound of explosives and Mamata can ignite it, but at each step there will come—also coming—obstacles from Delhi.

#### Bengal Congress Seeks Distance

93AS1068B Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in Bengali 22 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Debashis Bhattacharya: "When Mamata Leads a Movement, West Bengal Congress Leaders Try to Hide Themselves"]

[Text] It may be that Narasimha Rao has realized after so many days that it is not easy to make the communists happy! A superficial idea about his "love for the CPI-M" [Communist Party of India-Marxist] prevailed for a long time in the West Bengal Congress circle. Whatever might be the theoretical explanation and analysis behind this



idea, a kind of fear and confusion that worked in the minds of many ordinary Congress workers in West Bengal was that Delhi or its higher-ups in the Congress Party will pull the reins from behind if any kind of big movement starts against the CPI-M or any step taken that could cause inconvenience to the communists. It is because Prime Minister Rao does not want to antagonize the CPI-M now in "the interest of saving his own throne."

There is no doubt that the prime minister's various activities have also helped to further confirm the fear that was built in the minds of a section of the Congress Party about him. Narasimha Rao did not stand by the side of the harassed Congress workers and supporters in West Bengal and all the allegations made against the Left Front government's oppression, unholy practice, and maladministration got placed in his waste paper basket. Mamata Banerjee, who is marked as a symbol of uncompromising struggle against the CPI-M, has become a victim of Delhi's extreme callousness. Even after Mamata's molestation at the Mahakaran [West Bengal government secretariat], when she was a minister of the federal government, Delhi did not open its mouth. The prime minister also did not inquire over the phone about Mamata, as a mere courtesy.

Within 20 minutes after the end of the prime minister's election trip to Tripura in February last, the election commission showing the cause of the "deterioration in the law and order" situation, dropped the election two days before the casting of votes. During his trip to Tripura, his loyal leaders and ministers had to whisper into the prime minister's ear to say something strong against the CPI-M, otherwise their mission was not going to be accomplished. Later on, removing the Congress government from power, the voting took place in Tripura and victory came to the CPI-M. And that victory was sneered at from inside the Congress Party itself as "a victory of the Congress high command." But that is superficial! A large-scale reign of terror took place throughout the state before and after this West Bengal panchayat [local bodies] elections. The Congress leaders coming from all levels in the state protested against it and lodged complaints to Delhi. Home Minister S.B. Chavan affirmed that he would himself visit West Bengal and the dates for the visit were also announced. But where is Chavan? No one liked to talk to the few Congress leaders, whom the AICC [All India Congress Committee] sent with a badge of a high level delegation, to inquire into the CPI-M reign of terror in West Bengal. One should not forget here that the prime minister is the top-most Congress leader who decides the party policy.

The Congress workers have naturally become confused to some extent after noticing such incidents one after the other. Their question is: although Delhi has never restricted the launching of any anti-CPI-M agitation, could the "soft" attitude of the prime minister toward the CPI-M create a correct mental set up for agitation? Of course, many people are saying that all the secular and democratic forces should fight united against the

emergence of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the way the communal dangers are growing tall. In that sphere neither the Congress nor the Left is untouchable by each other. It is a relevant argument, but the question is: after so much of flattery could P.V. Narasimha Rao win the "heart" of the communists? No he could not, and, therefore, he has to move slowly to the path of conflict with the CPI-M. Immediately after Jyoti Basu's party declared its firm resolve to move a no-confidence motion against the prime minister in Parliament, P.V. Narasimha Rao had to adopt the policy of putting counter-pressure on the CPI-M on the matter of the appointment of a new West Bengal governor. At his meeting with Mamata—the spokesperson of the controversial Bengal Line—just before the implementation of the block Mahakaran program at her call in West Bengal, the prime minister made her understand that now he will have his unstinting support for any big agitation against the CPI-M. The latest news from Delhi says that the prime minister will not make any decision on the issue of appointing the governor of West Bengal before verifying the role of the CPI-M on the no-confidence motion in Parliament. Although the trend on which side the event will take its turn might be mostly available after the Narasimha-Jyoti Basu meeting tomorrow, it is obvious that in this situation of bargaining the prime minister has to substantially move himself this time from the blind ally of flattery to the CPI-M. He has to blow hot and cold at the same breath for his own interest and that he has already started.

The reflection of Delhi's attitude on the CPI-M will surely fall on the Congress politics in West Bengal. Maybe normally we will be able to guess Delhi's attitude from the type of movement the Congress will launch and the risk it will take in that state where the CPI-M is holding the undisputed power for the past 16 years and where Jyoti Basu himself is sitting at the helm of that power. But the strange thing is that whenever we look at the West Bengal Congress Party instead of getting any idea, our fear and confusion increase fourfold.

The mutual squabbles among the West Bengal Congress Party leaders could not hold the atmosphere that was created after the remarkable success of the Party in the panchayat elections. Not only that, besides giving statements to the press, the state Congress leadership did not adopt any such program that could raise enthusiasm. I do not say that a program should mean an agitation to create obstruction. Has any one of the steps that Somen Mitra [president of the West Bengal Congress Party] talked about during the panchayat election against the CPI-M "reign of terror" materialized? For instance, after a meeting with the state governor this Congress leader said that they would immediately file cases against some IAS [Indian Administrative Service] and IPS [Indian Police Service] officers on the "basis of definite charges" against them. It has been nearly two months, and meanwhile governor Nurul Hassan has died, but Somen Mitra's file has not yet been prepared. Is it called a movement? During his election campaign Somen was

encircled by the CPI-M supporters when he visited Chapui village near Asansol, where he announced that after voting, the first meeting at the call of the state Congress Party will be held in that village. That was said also two months ago. He might not be remembering it because of his various busy activities. Now, of course, when Mamata has performed the "block Mahakaran" in West Bengal, Somen Mitra—president of the state Congress Party—along with his close leaders, has gone out of the state to Delhi. Sitting there in a statement to the press he said: the Congress must go to the villages because nothing can be achieved in Calcutta. I am reminded here of Ashok Sen [well-known West Bengal Congress leader]. Just before quitting the Congress Party he declared that he intended "to stand by the side of oppressed Congress workers" and the very next day he left for London.

That is why I was saying that it is now necessary to remove the confusion that exists on what Delhi wants and also what the leadership—that is "holding power"—in the West Bengal Congress Party—wants. Attempts have been made so far to make the people understand that the prime minister does not want to fight against the CPI-M. But for political reasons, today's situation is somewhat different. Therefore, to see Mamata alone even today in the battlefield against the CPI-M increases our fear and confusion.

#### Harms Disciplined Leadership

93AS1068C Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in English 23 Jul 93 p 4

[Editorial: "How Long Will This Type of Politics Continue?"]

[Text] Calcutta highways were again strewn with blood and several valuable lives were lost. Those dead will never come back. Maybe for the time being a few structures for the martyrs will be built here and there, but after some time they will also be drowned in the abyss of oblivion like the names of those killed. This is the destiny of the current time. Under the pretext of this bloodshed a Bengal bundh [strike] was called. This mode of expressing emotion, discontent, and anger is also familiar, and no strike is in vain whenever it is called once. After the passage of 24 hours without any activity, the sponsors of the bundh will declare that it was successful. However, the government will claim its failure and might think of staging a counter-strike. In reply to a smaller procession taking out a longer one, holding bigger public meetings and sponsoring flawless bundhs have now become the politics of this unfortunate state and with it the condition of the general public in the state has become miserable. The politicians have no time to think about the magnitude of the sufferings these types of political activities could bring to the toiling masses or to the people whose lives and living depend on small shops and business or to those who are always involved in difficulties for various reasons. These political activities have stopped education for the students,

caused medical crises for the patients and overall have brought nearer an economic friction in the state. But in the calculation of politics, all these things are irrelevant today. What counts most to this unethical politics is who lost and who gained for the time being in this show of strength.

Was whatever happened on Wednesday [21 Jul] inevitable? This question would certainly come up because it was not difficult to guess that Mamata Banerjee and her followers could incite the public. But nevertheless the Left government police, playing the role of the police in colonial days, wished to establish the peace of a graveyard by resorting to indiscriminate firing. In the literal sense the "law" was saved for the time being at the cost of blood, but could the order be restored? There is no doubt that a large area of the city came under the control of the hooligans on Wednesday. They freely destroyed everything and played with fire, and the helpless citizens ran in fear for their lives. There was also no transportation for them on the streets. However, everything was done in the name of the people and in demand for the restoration of law and order. But there existed no harmony between the demand of the agitation—either the rule of law or the president's rule—and the situation that prevailed in Calcutta on Wednesday. If the government and administration completely failed in restoring order on that day, then in a similar manner the organizers and conductors of the agitation also failed. Such a trend in the state politics is obviously gradually becoming a matter of concern.

However, it could be said that this was not a new experience for the state. Since the forties, setting fire to trams, holding strikes, taking out processions, starting riots, and so forth continued with the Left politics. In fact, the leftists of that time were probably the trainers in this matter to all other political parties. The politics of destroying everything they once imported in the name of the people's movement, has today come back from their opponents and boomeranged on them. In fact, this ultimate goal in politics—the attempt to create disorder in the name of the people's movement—has more or less been ingrained today in all the political parties and groups in the country. And as this type of politics is mostly dependent on muscles, it has been noticed that those who are marked as anti-social elements gain respectable position in all the parties. Therefore, it is meaningless to raise the question of why an agitation is not or does not become peaceful. As there was no shortage for the Congress government in Tripura to justify its use of police force for punishing the opposition under the pretext of crushing a violent agitation, Jyoti Basu's government here also had many such reasons in support of the police. These are not reasons but evil reasons. In a democratic system where multi-party freedom is acceptable, this kind of unconventional and undemocratic agitation—whether coming from the leftists or the Congress—should not get support. Has the time not yet come to let them know about it in clear terms? However this is the responsibility of the ordinary

citizens. As they have always tolerated everything, this disorder remains in force under the pretext of politics even five decades after independence. Besides, shouting not philosophical debates or factual discussions take place in the parliament or in legislative assemblies. The interest of all parties lies only in taking out processions and setting up barricades on highways!

A question might arise about the net outcome of Mamata Banerjee's current agitation. What did the Juva [youth] Congress get at the expense of so many lives? Is it an achievement that Mamata has returned to the focal point in the state politics? Or, is it an achievement that from the marginal position she has secured her rightful place in the politics of the Congress Party? She might be having everything—enthusiasm, courage, organizational capability—but where she is going to utilize that strength is under open consideration today. Meanwhile, all the problems of the country have completely escaped her sight. Her reactions were not available after the demolition of the Babri mosque nor was any statement heard from her side in favor or against the new Congress economic policy, but there was no shortage in her enthusiasm in the creation of one of her own workers organizations. At the time of the panchayat [local body] elections, she had a chance to confront face to face Jyoto Basu's government—which she is so eager to dismiss—but there too she remained practically absent. When the nation remained terribly occupied with a scam—Harshad Mehta [financial scandal] and other issues—she appeared like a furiously quarrelsome woman to blockade the Mahakaran [West Bengal government secretariat]. This is not novel politics, but also is not supportable. As it is regrettable for any party to occupy the political scene by demolishing Babri mosque or to build its future by taking advantage of the weakness of the federal government by black-mailing it, similarly any attempt to occupy the Mahakaran forcibly is reproachable. To come out in an adventure with an organized procession of innumerable people is not a democratic but a crooked terrorist path.

### **Hindu Religious Leaders Support VHP Call For Ram Temple**

93AS1038A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
13, 14 Jul 93

[Article by Prabash Joshi: "The Shankaracharyas' Religious Initiative on the Yaksh Question"] [13 Jul p 4]

[Text] About a fortnight ago, the Shankaracharyas of Dwarka, Badri, and Puri met, after 14 years and for the third time this century in Shringeri. They respectfully included Swami Jayander Saraswati of Kanchi in this meeting. Kanchi is not one of the four major dhams [holy sites], and the Shankaracharyas of that dham is not considered to be one of the four major religious leaders. During the last few years, however, Kanchi has become very respectable. It has made so much progress that it is considered to be competitive with the original pith [holy

site] of Shankaracharya. Because the Kanchi math [mission] was established much later, its Shankaracharya was separated from the four other Shankaracharyas. However, the leader of Kanchi was respectfully invited on 27 June and was included in all meetings. If they had not done this, then the purpose for which the Shankaracharyas met would not have been attained, and if the Shankaracharyas continue to be stubborn about the prestige and rank of their own math, then what kind of example can they be to the society and the country?

Including Kanchi in the Shringeri meeting was the first proper step taken by the Shankaracharyas. They called this meeting to resolve the Ramjanambhoomi conflict and find a solution that would be accepted by all. After about one and one-half hour, their joint statement (as they say in diplomatic and international vocabulary) was issued in Sanskrit. Its Hindi translation indicated that an unanimously accepted solution to the Ayodhya problem can be reached, and that all political parties should not abuse the temple issue for their political goals. The mandleshwars sants, Mahants sadhus [religious figures], and religious organizations that want to build the temple in Ayodhya should first agree not to become tools in the hands of political organizations. The present situation can easily be resolved if all non-political religious leaders have an agreement. This way, the land that the Indian Government has taken over should be given for building the temple to people who are above politics and who have credibility all over the country.

The Shankaracharyas have asked all people with the appropriate attitude to create an atmosphere of peace, harmony, and mutual confidence, and to work hard to resolve this burning question. They decided to have meetings periodically. Shankaracharya Gauri Shankar, the head of Shringeri Sharda Pith, was given the responsibility of coordinating the meeting. The Shankaracharyas also announced their decision to form a committee of non-political and well respected people. After the Chaturmas celebration, the Shankaracharyas will meet in Haridwar in October-November.

Before we praise the meeting of the Shankaracharyas and their announcement in Shringeri or try to find the historical meaning of their meeting, we should clarify a few things. The Shankaracharyas who made this announcement do not have a position in our religion like that of the Pope in Christendom. The original Shankaracharya established four original maths in the ninth century. After Badri, Dwarka, and Puri, the fourth pith should have been in Rameshwar. Instead, it is in Shringeri, and has now become the headquarters. The reason for this math is not the dhams. We do not know how long these four dhams have been established and had a popular following. The original Shankaracharya respected the traditions in these dhams, established the maths there, and called the head of these maths Shankaracharyas. The original Shankaracharya never gave any teachings to Hindus, nor did he direct the other Shankaracharyas to do so. He did not make any arrangements for the four to meet and discuss religious issues,



nor did he authorize them to issue directives that had to be accepted by all followers of the religion. The prestige and respect that a Shankaracharya in Sanatan dharma [orthodox Hinduism] occupies are there because of their devotion, worship, and the moral strength they have symbolized for centuries. This moral strength and their tradition have placed them in this distinguished position to find a solution for the Ramjanambhoomi-Babri Masjid question.

Also, this clarification is necessary because, during the last 30 years the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] and, during the last 60 years, the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh], have tried to organize the Sanatan Dharam like Christianity and Islam. In the past, Arya Samajis and Sanatanis [religious figures] tried to divide Sanatan Dharam in Punjab and organize it like Islam and Christianity. In Punjab and some parts of Haryana, this division is still visible in some social practices. The RSS, and before it, Vir Savarkar accepted the word "Hindu," given by Christians and Muslims, in religious, social, and cultural contexts. Vir Savarkar and the RSS, in order to force this word on history, and also because they understood British efforts, tried to give a Hindu definition to history. Hinduism is a nationalist, religious, social, cultural, and, most of all, political definition of Sanatan Dharam resulting from the British imperial perception. It does not matter how often Hindus and the RSS family repeat it; the concept of Hinduism was imposed on us by the Muslims who invaded India in the name of Islam and the British, who had the mission of changing us into Christians and "cultured" people, at the same time transforming India into their own colony. It should be noted that the Shankaracharyas never mentioned Hinduism; they talked about Sanatan Dharam only. They talked about religion, but not about Hinduism. This is not a fine or technical difference; it is the difference between the original concept and the present interpretation.

Calling the meeting of Shankaracharyas in Shringeri a summit meeting of the Sanatan Dharam would be contrary to Indian and Sanatan traditions. However, this was the third meeting of the century, except during the Kumbh [eclipse] ceremonies. Therefore, the historical significance of this meeting is clear. This time, though, they met to discuss a question that had become a very important issue for Hindu society and the Sanatan Dharam. By raising the question of Ramjanambhoomi-Babri Masjid, they have not only made it a religious, social, and cultural question for Hindus and Muslims, but also a geographic and historical issue. This was done first by the VHP, then the whole RSS family was involved. The RSS family used this conflict to impose its beliefs about Hindus, Hinduism, and the Hindu nation not only on the Hindu society and the Sanatan Dharam, but on the whole of India. On 6 December, the RSS family tore down the Babri Masjid through a pre-planned, emotional demonstration, and tried to give Hindus the religious framework that does not exist in Sanatan Dharam or among Hindus.

If religion is Sanatana [permanent], it cannot last long without continuous change. That which always changes becomes permanent and ever-present. Therefore, in this changing situation, giving it this new role is not against the religion. However, every change should be within the framework of religious tradition. Only then will it become long lasting. Pulling people in as part of a pre-arranged impassioned demonstration and destroying a historic building that was established as a mosque can be an Islamic or a Semitic practice; it just cannot be a religious or Sanatan practice. Therefore, this not only divided Hindus and Muslims; it also divided Hindus. Hindus were also hurt by it, and it was the Hindus who opposed this more than any other group. The RSS family does not call these people Hindus. But it is the grace of Lord Ram that no one in Sanatan Dharam has the right to identify someone as a Hindu or a non-Hindu. What little organization there was in Sanatan Dharam was limited to maths and piths. Among the maths, the four maths are the most respected, as are their heads, the Shankaracharyas. However, the Shankaracharyas cannot issue certificates to people for being Hindus. Therefore, the greater Hindu society recognizes neither the RSS family nor the crowd of sadhus, saints, and mahants, who gathered like Lord Shiva's wedding parade, nor their orders and directives.

If anyone can save the Hindu society, which is going through a very difficult time because of the Ram Temple issue and the question of its being built in Ayodhya, then it is the Shankaracharyas, who can rise above the demands of their maths and worldly restrictions and Sanatan Dharam rules. In order to reach that level, the Shankaracharyas gave up the old problem over the Kanchi Math and then invoked Sanatan Dharam rules and kept the whole Hindu society in their minds. They favor building Ram's Temple in Ayodhya, even though it is not clear from their statement whether the temple should be built there, exactly where the structure of the Babri Masjid existed. All in all, however, they did indicate that the temple must be built "there." That the temple should be built there was agreed to by all those whom the RSS family gave a bad name by calling them secularist, anti-Ram, and anti-Hindu. This stupid writer, former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, and V.P. Singh, who belong to different poles, are also included among these people. However, all of these asked for the unity of the goal and the means. Therefore, they believe that the temple should not be built forcibly; it should be built after talks and development of goodwill. The structure should perhaps be given to a trust, or until the decision is made by the Supreme Court, whether it was Ram's Temple there or of some other incarnation.

In a religion like Islam, in which any person who does not have faith is called a kafir [infidel], the world is divided into "us" versus "them." In this Islam, a mosque built on land that was forcibly taken is also called unholy. Hindus, who do not divide the world into "us" versus "them" within the Sanatan Dharam, do not desire the salvation of Hindus only; they want

the salvation of every living being, and they do not consider anything done forcibly to be appropriate. Ram's Temple is built in his birthplace; Ram was the embodiment of high ideals, and still lives in the hearts of the people. His temple should not be built in his birthplace by breaking religious rules and traditions. If the worshipers want to build Ram's Temple at his birthplace, then they cannot follow the means of Mehmood Gazanvi or Babar's commander in chief, Mir Baqi. This basic difference between the end and the means has divided Hindu society. The Shankaracharyas have asked the government to give the confiscated land to respected, non-political people for building a temple. They know that the government will hand over this land to a non-political religious trust only after the Supreme Court gives its advice to the government under Article 143. The Shankaracharyas have not set any timeline, nor have they given any warning to the government.

The second religious and far-sighted step taken by the Shankaracharyas was working with the VHP and the Ramjanambhoomi trust organization, which has started this campaign. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad has been restricted. The Bahri Panchat, which did not support the government ban on the RSS and the Bajrang Dal, did support the ban on the VHP. The Panchat has declared that the VHP had the moral responsibility of destroying the Babri Masjid. The members of Ramjanambhoomi trust made a mockery of laws and courts last July during the kar seva. Swami Nishchalanand, Shankaracharya of Puri, told newsmen in Delhi that the committee to be established after the Shringeri statement will not include political people, but will include members of Ramjanambhoomi Nyas. This is exactly what Shankaracharyas should do. The Shankaracharyas cannot create an atmosphere of mutual trust by excluding Ramjanambhoomi Nyas or the RSS family, and they declared in their statement that such an environment was mandatory. This would also be against the Sanatan Dharam, because this religion requires the acceptance of everyone and their inclusion, and not considering anyone an enemy. One who walks with everyone cannot divide Hindu society. That person must include even those who have tried to divide Hindu society. Whether those invited people join or do not join is their prerogative. That is what religion is. By excluding Ramjanambhoomi Nyas, they could not create an atmosphere of harmony and mutual trust. Therefore, the Shankaracharyas have taken this positive and religious step. Tomorrow, you will learn about the reaction of the BJP to the Shankaracharya's Shringeri meeting. [14 Jul p 4]

[Text] The Shankaracharyas told the government in Shringeri that the land it confiscated in Ayodhya should be given for building Ram's temple to people who are above politics and who are nationally respected. They told people in Mandaleshwars as well as sants, mahants, sadhus, and religious organizations that if they want the temple built immediately, then they should not become tools in the hands of political organizations, whether

they do so knowingly or unknowingly. They said that political parties are abusing the issue of the temple for their own vested interests. The Shankaracharyas did not name any political party, group, or religious leader.

The banned VHP, however, decided at once that the statement issued by the Shankaracharyas was against it. The very next day, right in Shringeri, VHP General Secretary Sadanand Kakade said that the Shankaracharyas' statement was one-sided. He said it was generally against the VHP and specifically against the Ramjanambhoomi Nyas, and that it was made under Congress Party direction. This was a Congress Party effort, he claimed, to get the Shankaracharyas together on the Ram's Temple issue in order to break up religious leaders and to politically exploit them. Until Marg Darshak Mandal, composed of religious leaders associated with the Ramjanambhoomi campaign, is included in it, nothing will happen. He then said that the Shankaracharyas represented only the Shaivite sect.

After taking the Shankaracharyas and their statement to task, VHP General Secretary Kakade obviously could not help warning the Indian Government also. Kakade said that if a new trust is formed without Ramjanambhoomi Nyas, then what happened after Operation Blue Star at the Golden Temple will happen in Ayodhya. In other words if the new trust builds Ram's Temple, then the VHP and Nyas will do exactly what the Akalis and the terrorists did to rebuild the damaged Akal Takht after Operation Blue Star. It would be destroyed and rebuilt all over again. How the high ideals and the actions of the VHP and Nyas leaders are similar to the Akalis and the terrorists is a subject of research and writing in itself. At this time it would suffice to say that not only the VHP and the Nyas, but the RSS family have announced that the Babri Masjid is not a mosque at all. After 1936, no one worshiped there, and since 1949, Ram's statue has been established there and has been worshiped daily. They say it is the temple of Ramlala [image of Ram], and that it must be rebuilt. The Ramlala temple that was built was not damaged by the military or paramilitary forces, but by the kar sevaks, their leaders, sadhus, sants, and mahants during the craze they created. If it is not a mosque, and was believed to be Ram's Temple, then why was Sadhvi Ritambhara screaming to kar sevaks to give one more push to break up the Babri Masjid in order to encourage them? The rubble of which building was considered prasada [sacred item] by Acharaya Dharmender.

Akal Takhat was destroyed because it had been transformed into a fort, and Sant Bhinderwale and his terrorist supporters used this to fight the Indian army. Was the Babri mosque destroyed by such action? Not only Kakade but leaders of the VHP, Nyas, and Marg Darshak Mandal and sants have repeatedly said that if a government trust builds a temple in Ayodhya, then they will destroy it, just like the Sikhs destroyed the rebuilt Akal Takhat. We should not pay attention to their talk; we should think about their emotions. They say that only Ramjanambhoomi Nyas has the right to build Ram's Temple in Ayodhya. No power in the world can take

away this sole right from the organization. The whole RSS family is standing alert to defend this right. If the Shankaracharyas put a question mark on this monopoly, then they will not be considered the representative religious leaders of Hindu society. They will be called puppets in the hands of the Congress Party for its political vested interests. They will say that these Shankaracharyas have no right to say anything about Ram's Temple. Surprising comments, just like Kakade's, were made by Acharaya Giriraj Kishore and Ashok Singhal also.

Everyone from Kakade to Ashok Singhal has objected over another issue. Swarupanand, Shankaracharya of Dwarka Pith, considers himself the Shankaracharya of Badri Pith. The Shankaracharyas have recognized him as the Shankaracharya of both math; however, the leaders of the VHP and the Nyas say that the Allahabad High Court has recognized the claim of Swami Vasudevanand on the Badri Dham. Thus, why did not the Shankaracharyas invite Vasudevanand to this meeting and show their respect for the high court decision? Why did not they declare him the Shankaracharya of Badri Math? Swami Swarupanand calls himself the Shankaracharya of both Dwarka and Badri. Why was not his claim rejected? The insistence of following the high court's decision by the VHP and Nyas leaders should be commended. The Shankaracharya of Dwarka is not above the law. The Shankaracharyas as a whole have no right to ignore the laws and the courts. In the eyes of the law, an untouchable person and Swami Swarupanand are equals. If the law is not respected, then we cannot be a democratic republic.

Sanatan Dharam has a constitution similar to that of a democratic government. The religious authority that the four Shankaracharyas have over the mahants, mahamandaleshwars, and other heads of piths is implemented through their moral strength. Anyone who believes in Sanatan Dharam has the right to challenge anyone, including a Shankaracharya. For it, the greatest thing is the voice of one's soul, because the soul is a part of God himself and is always independent. The restrictions are imposed by one's karma. God will not leave anyone without paying for one's karma. Everyone suffers the results of karma. Even when God appears in his incarnations, as well as the guru that helps you see God, has to bear the consequences of their karmas. A man's karma decides his fate. In an organization such as the Sanatan Dharam, the VHP leaders and workers, the faithful followers of Nyas, and the sadhus and sants within the Marg Darshak Mandal have the right to challenge the statement issued by the Shankaracharyas. Every Hindu has the right to criticize the statements issued by Shankaracharyas in Shringeri, accusing them of playing into the hands of the Congress Party, and not having the right to represent the whole Hindu religion, because they can represent only the Shaivite sect. Just as in a democratic society, any citizen has the same rights as the president and the prime minister, any religious person in Sanatan Dharam has the same rights as a Shankaracharya and a mahamandaleshwar.

The authority of law in a democratic society and the right of faith and morality in Sanatan Dharam raise some fundamental questions. If Dwarka's Shankaracharya Swarupanand gives Badri Pith to Swami Vasudevanand—because, according to Nyas and VHP leaders, the decision was made by the Allahabad High Court—then why did the VHP, Ramjanambhoomi Nyas, Kar Seva Simiti, Marg Darshak Mandal, and Dharma Sansad, have the kar seva on the 2.77 acres of land leading to riots in July? The Allahabad High Court has ordered that everything stay as it is on this land, and that the building be built on this land until a decision is made. However, all the High Court orders were disobeyed by them. The district magistrate who brought the court order to stop the kar seva was told that the kar seva was being managed by sadhus and sants. He was told to give this order to them. Later, it was said that sadhus and sants obey only Ram and no one else. They said that sadhus and sants are above the law, and that this is a question of Ram's Temple, on which no court in the world can make a decision. These reasonings were presented by the leaders, workers, and supporters of the Ramjanambhoomi campaign. Why, then, are they saying that Swami Swarupanand should accept the decision of the Allahabad High Court? Are only the sadhus and sants involved in the Ramjanambhoomi campaign organized by the VHP above the law? Because there is the question of Ramjanambhoomi's dignity, is it to be considered outside the court's jurisdiction? Should the court orders be immediately implemented by the well-respected piths of Dwarka and Badri?

The VHP and Nyas leaders also told the Shankaracharyas that they should respect the Allahabad High Court orders and recognize and invite Swami Vasudevanand as Badri Dham's Shankaracharya. They should also cancel the claim of Swami Swarupanand on both Dwarka and Badri math. Then why were the Allahabad High Court and the Supreme Court orders to protect the Babri Masjid not obeyed? The BJP government, which claimed to have the mandate to build Ram's Temple, promised both courts that it would not let the structure be harmed. A similar promise was made by our nation's legislators and the Rashtriya Ekta Parishad. The same promise was also made by Rajmata Scindia and Swami Chinmyananda, the VHP and Ramjanambhoomi Nyas leaders, to the Supreme Court. They not only failed to keep their word to obey the court orders, but also shredded them. Should only Shankaracharyas obey the high court order for the Badri math? Was it not necessary for the RSS family leaders, sadhus, sants, mahants, and kar sevaks associated with the 6 December campaign in Ayodhya to obey the high court and Supreme Court orders?

The RSS family does not take responsibility for the destruction of the Babri Masjid; however, it says that if the Allahabad High Court had made the decision on 2.77 acres of land in Ayodhya before 6 December, then the structure would not have been destroyed. The high court, whose order was ignored, is being blamed by those who



ignored the order. Judge Mathur, who wrote the decision on the 2.77 acres of land on 11 December, wrote in his postscript, "This court is being accused of delaying its decision, and thus contributing to the destruction of the structure. We were making a decision on the control of 2.77 acres of land, and not on the structure. There was no dearth of court orders for protecting the structure. Everyone involved had given assurances that it would be protected. The courts have no authority to force implementation of the orders they issue. This responsibility falls on the government. It is easy to let the genie out of the bottle, but it is not easy to put it back in." The whole world knows who let the genie out of the bottle. It also knows who is failing to return it. However, there is not even one religious person among the so-called protectors of religion who can say that we disobeyed the court order, and the law should punish us accordingly.

However, these people are accusing the Shankaracharyas of being puppets in the hands of politicians and not respecting the law. Why? Because the initiative taken by the Shankaracharya is threatening their control over Hindu society, the Hindu religion, and India. They can easily call other people secularists, anti-Hindu, or anti-nationals, but they cannot call the Shankaracharyas anti-Hindu. Who would accept that? They are challenging the authority of the Shankaracharyas, but they think they have the monopoly not only on building the temple in Ayodhya, but also on making changes in the Hindu religion and this country's history, geography, society, and culture. The only ones who are nationalists are Hindus. The rest of the Hindus and non-Hindus are anti-Hindus and, therefore, traitors. Is this a religious and Sanatani method to strengthen the Hindu religion, society, and India?

Most of the people who oppose and reject this approach are Hindus themselves. They want to protect their religion and nation from the self-appointed protectors of religion and nationalists. These Hindus are Congressites, left wingers, members of Janata Dal, Bahujan Samaj Party members, and members of the BJP. If they decide to go to Shankaracharyas to protect the religion and the country from those who let the genie out of the bottle, then they are accused of practicing politics. Is it a religious deed when Murli Manohar Joshi, Ashok Singhal, Mahant Avaidhnath, Swami Chinmayanand, and others when they form "dharam sansad" [religious parliament] and have the sadhus, sants, and mahants do whatever they want? Would it be a religious deed if the VHP's Ashoka Singhal gathered sadhus, sants, and mahants at the behest of the RSS and demanded that a BJP government be established at the Center just to build the temple in Ayodhya? But when Swami Venkaraman, C. Subramanayam, and Shringeri's Shankaracharya, Tirath Swami, ask to establish a committee of non-political religious people, then it suddenly becomes politics. The people of the VHP and the Nyas definitely think that this country's people are animals when it comes to intelligence, sagacity, religion, and truth, and that they have the divine right to push these animals around. Victory to Ram!

### **CPI Said Unable to Adapt, Hearing 'Death-Knell'**

93AS1033G New Delhi INDIA TODAY in English  
15 Jul 93 p 25

[Article by J.M. Ansari: "Left in the Lurch: Election Exposes a Deep Rot in the CPI"]

[Text] It may well be the last battle for a party that was once the dominant communist force in the country. And this time it is for its own survival. The results of the recent by-elections spread over several states and the panchayat elections in West Bengal have sounded what could be the death-knell for the Communist Party of India (CPI).

The embarrassment in the parliamentary by-election in Patna, once considered its home turf, has driven home the point that the party is nothing in Bihar without Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav. But if Patna was embarrassing, the results of the panchayat polls in West Bengal were downright damaging. Of the 61,000-odd gram panchayat seats, the CPI secured a dismal 746. It managed to bag about 85 panchayat samitis out of a total of 9,003 results announced so far. Further, it won only six of the 552 zila parishad seats. For the first time it lost out to the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] and even the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. The ideological and political drift of the party, exacerbated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, has been in evidence for some time and unless its leadership takes bold steps, the CPI is likely to fade into oblivion.

The party has also lagged behind the times by not establishing a notable second line of command of younger leaders. The response of the older generation of leaders to Mikhail Gorbachev's radical re-interpretation of socialist ideology was incoherent. For instance, while they were not as adamant in opposing all of Gorbachev's reforms as the CPI(M), they remained hostile to his opening up of the economy. It was at this crucial ideological juncture in the communist world that a younger, more flexible set of leaders might have ensured a successful adaption to changed circumstances.

CPI-watchers tend to pinpoint the decline to the mid-'70s when the party, under S.A. Dange, made the cardinal mistake of supporting the Emergency and identifying with the Congress(I). It sowed doubt and confusion in the cadres. "We are still bleeding from the mistakes of that phase," admits CPI's National Council member A.B. Bardhan. The CPI(M) reaped the benefits of having unequivocally opposed the Emergency.

More radical regional parties like the IPF [Indian People's Front] in Bihar and the PWG [People's War Group] in Andhra Pradesh have isolated the CPI further. After the split in 1964 which brought the CPI(M) into existence, the party joined hands with the socialists in Bihar to consolidate its position but in the process acquired the habit of using political 'crutches'. It was a partner of the United Front in 1967 and the Congress in 1972. But the 1977 polls changed all that. After being rejected for

supporting the Congress(I) it began losing out to the IPF which took up the cause of the tribals in a more militant way. The result has been that the CPI's membership in the state has dwindled to just over one lakh.

In West Bengal the CPI compounded its Emergency blunder by dithering over the CPI(M)'s offer to join the Left Front. From 36 seats in the Assembly between 1972 and 1977, its tally plummeted to a paltry two in 1977. Alarmed, the party hitched itself to the Left Front bandwagon in 1982. But as Swadhin Guha, a state council member admits: "By the time we woke up we had missed the bus." Its membership in the state for the last several years has stagnated at around 37,000.

In the other left bastion, Kerala, the CPI is still considered the poor man's party. After its betrayal of the CPI(M) in the '60s, it joined hands with it again in 1978. Since then the coalition has endured. Through the AITUC [All India Trade Union Congress] the party retains some influence over organised labour in traditional sectors like toddy tappers. The erosion has mainly been in the students' wing where the CPI(M)-supported SFI [Students Federation of India] has eaten away at the AISF's [expansion not given] hold.

"From here, where do we go? Why is [it] that our organisations cannot move forward?" Secretary-General Inderjeet Gupta asked the delegates at the party's national conference at Thrissur, Kerala in March this year. There were no answers at Thrissur. Left with no options, the CPI is seriously contemplating a merger with the CPI(M). But the CPI(M) does not appear overly eager or inclined towards a unity move. It seems to favour the unification of mass organisations to begin with and coordination at the political level to a hasty, possibly unhappy, marriage. Either way, the CPI's political balance sheet is literally in the red.

#### **VHP Said Planning to Start Movements on Mathura, Varanasi**

93AS1043B *Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English*  
15 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, July 14—The VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] will shortly send feelers to the shankaracharyas eliciting their support for the "liberation" of the Gyan-vyapi mosque at Varanasi and the Sakshigopal temple at Mathura.

VHP sources said the shankaracharyas would be asked to raise the issues regarding the two shrines while leaving the Ram temple dispute in the hands of the Ramjanmabhoomi Nyas. The Nyas had been at the forefront of the Ayodhya movement and was competent to deal with the matter, they feel.

The VHP move is seen as a diversionary tactic to keep the shankaracharyas out of the Ramjanmabhoomi issue. It also indicates that the recent conclave of four shankaracharyas at Sringeri has rattled the Sangh parivar more than its leadership cares to admit.

The VHP hopes that the shankaracharyas would be enthused by the idea of leading fresh agitations and leave the Ram temple movement alone. The organisation is particularly worried by the fact that the shankaracharyas have denounced the involvement of political interests in the Ayodhya movement.

The development also comes close at the heels of the VHP secretary-general, Mr Ashok Singhal's assertion that only the Nyas was competent to construct a Ram temple at Ayodhya in view of the "sacrifices" made by it. The VHP leader in a letter to the shankaracharyas has asked them to clarify what they meant by political interests and whether they would consider Chandraswami's Som yagna as an example of such intervention.

Mr Singhal said many people wanted to jump into the fray now that kar sevaks had demolished the Babri structure. VHP sources said the shankaracharyas would be told that as "Shaivites" they should concentrate on liberating shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva. The Ram issue should be left to sadhus belonging to the Ramanand sect.

Besides the technical points raised by the VHP, the organisation has sought to protect its vital interests which are involved in the Ram temple dispute. At a time when elections in four Hindi states are round the corner, the Sangh parivar can ill-afford cracks.

While the VHP has adopted a carrot and stick policy, the BJP and the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] have taken a more sophisticated approach. The RSS general-secretary had reacted to the Sringeri conclave by stating that the shankaracharyas' initiative was welcome as it endorsed the Sangh parivar's position that the Ram temple should be built exactly where the Ram lalla idols are placed.

The VHP move to indirectly rake up the Varanasi and Mathura issues is also the single most important indicator that the two shrines are very much on the Sangh parivar's agenda. The Sringeri developments seem to have prompted the VHP to put the issues on the front-burner. In the VHP's reckoning, the shankaracharyas move to hijack the Ram temple movement was too dangerous to ignore. The organisation is hoping that the bait of leading two new movements would do the trick.

#### **Quick Settlement of Kashmir Crisis Seen in National Interest**

93AS1067B *Varanasi AJ in Hindi* 19 Jul 93 p 6

[Article by Raj Kumar: "Kashmir: Difficult Question, Never Ending Answer"]

[Text] Until Pakistan achieves political stability, no one can hope to solve its problems with India. This is a bitter truth and a hard fact. As soon as the Indian politicians understand this, the path to India's progress will open up, because we cannot mentally prepare the people of

India for this long wait. We cannot postpone this with verbosity either. The reason is clear. Pakistan is controlled by Punjab. The big landlords, capitalists, and military officers control Punjab. The people of the northwest frontier, Balochistan, and Sindh do not like this. The situation in these three states is the same as that of East Bengal, now known as Bangladesh. The smoke, however, has been rising continuously from there. Where there is smoke, there is fire, and there is certainly fire there. They are trying to put the dust of blind faith in religion over this fire. This effort was successful in stopping the fire from getting out of control. This is because Pakistan was established on a foundation of blind faith in religion. How long this blind faith will continue is difficult to say. A major part of the Islamic world is influenced by it. Pakistan is no better than any other country in this area. The patronizing hand of the fundamentalist Saudi Arabia is also protecting it. The "black gold" of Libya is also helping it. Pakistan has become a safe haven for the nomadic terrorists of Sudan. The Afghan mujaheddin, who were involved in Afghanistan's civil war, have the full freedom of roaming Pakistan. The name of Islam is behind all these activities. The religious spokesmen, with the help of Punjabi capitalists of the same mindset, are cashing in on this feeling. This "leprosy also has itchiness." The Pakistani leaders who call themselves progressive are forced to keep holding onto slogans of Islam. They have blocked the path to resolving issues with India. This picture clarifies everything. Therefore, India is also forced to wait for a long time.

Pakistan has also created problems for India at the international level. On 2 March 1963, under the Pakistan-China Border Agreement, Pakistan handed over 2,700 square miles of Indian territory to China south of the traditional boundary in Kashmir. This way, Pakistan ignored the 17 January 1948 resolution passed in the Security Council and the proposal passed on 13 August 1948 by the United Nations Kashmir Commission. This clarifies the situation that whenever there is a chance to deal with Pakistan, the China-India disagreement will emerge whenever Kashmir is discussed. In the China-Pakistan agreement's Article 6, both sides agreed that "after an agreement is made between India and China over Kashmir, the country that takes control of this territory will have to discuss the issue with the Chinese government." There are many such complexities that definitely point to one aspect.

The use of military force does not solve problems. New international development also points to the fact that military action is no longer effective. This point of view has not been fully accepted so far; however, most countries accept the importance of this fact. The leaders who want to establish political supremacy by raising slogans like "Save Kashmir" are not helping the people understand the facts. Instead, they are misleading them with emotional slogans. The fact is that this is a crime that cannot be excused. This crime is similar to Saddam Husayn's crime of trying to take over part of Kuwait.

The political mobster Saddam Husayn had to face the bad results of these efforts, and the people and economy of Iraq suffered. Even today, sickly infants and the elderly are weeping for milk and medicine in Iraq. Iraq has money, and it also has the resources to produce more money. But it has been cut off from the world, and all of this is not useful to it. Our country already has enough problems, and it is unwise to increase those problems by raising inflammatory slogans.

We must keep an eye on another important change in this context. According to the Director General of the Border Security Force, Parkash Singh, many mercenary soldiers from other countries are also fighting alongside the Kashmiri terrorists that get help from Pakistan. According to one estimate, about 300 mercenaries from Sudan, Iran, and Bahrain are present in the Kashmir Valley now. With their help, the Kashmiri terrorists have also changed their fighting methods. They have started to fight security forces directly in various places. A large number of terrorists were killed in a confrontation with the security force recently. Among the killed were Pakistani, Afghan, and Sudanese soldiers. Even though more than 100,000 paramilitary forces are deployed there, it is for geographic reasons that these outsiders cannot be totally prevented from entering Kashmir. That is why we cannot totally seal the Jammu-Kashmir border. Still, because of the vigilance of our security forces, it is not easy for the attackers to enter Kashmir. The leaders who want to become successful in politics at any cost should pay attention to the problems faced by the security forces. Why did these leaders not come forward to straighten out these non-government human rights agencies from all over the world? Only they can answer this question. Leaders like George Fernandes can be ignored by calling them cynical. Indian security forces stationed in Jammu-Kashmir have to be trained to fight in jungles, mountains, and mountain passes, and they must fight enemies who are experts in such fighting. Worse, the enemies are such that we cannot tell them apart from the peaceful residents of Kashmir, unless some confidential information is given to the Indian military. Those who merely brag cannot estimate the problems faced by the people fighting in this situation. "The vine is bitter, and it has climbed over a poisoned tree." The terrorists trained by Pakistan have their own secret mechanism. This mechanism has many parts. These terrorists easily get all kinds of information about the movement of the security forces through local people, who are aware of their movement. To deal with such people, all places suspected of having such people present are surrounded and thoroughly searched. The security forces have no other alternative. In activities like these, innocent people sometimes also suffer. A human rights agency may use such human errors to prove its point. While screaming about this, they may achieve their goal of proving something but are not doing anything for human rights. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, human rights are openly being violated. The blood of humanity is being shed and mangled, and some of the very people who listen to complaints about India by the human rights agencies are



helping them by stopping the supply of arms to Bosnia, as ordered by the Security Council. Should we not call the attention of the people of India to this double standard? Such people can certainly be counted among those who, after crossing the river, kick away the canoe and drown it.

The effectiveness of the role of our government in Kashmir is also not above suspicion. Not only once, but many times, our government has badly failed in rebutting the poisonous propaganda spread by Pakistan's propaganda machinery. It is clear that when one is not determined, and there is no clear-cut policy, a situation like this will always emerge. The opposition's accusation that the Central Government has no clear Kashmir policy is not false. It is not enough to say that a third country's interference cannot be accepted in the problems of these two countries. Neither is it enough to say that Kashmir is an integral part of India, and that we cannot accept any compromise on this question. The assurance that our security forces are fully alert in Kashmir is not enough. The Center should also explain why the refugees that left Kashmir have not been returned to their homes. It must also explain what it is doing to these refugees, who have become desolate, to rehabilitate them. We can accept the fact that it is usually not easy to answer such questions. However, we cannot deny that delaying answers to such questions for a long time can also cause further deterioration of the situation. That is what is happening now. The task of sowing poisonous plants in the fields of these refugees is still going on. No efforts are being made to stop it. This is a dangerous situation, because it is blunting the sword without which we cannot protect Kashmir's culture. We cannot escape our responsibility to face the facts by saying that "It is easy to say but hard to act." Whatever is necessary to protect our existence must be done. If this is not possible, then we should relinquish our position.

#### **Advani's Return as BJP President Seen Highly Significant**

##### **Unanimous Choice**

93AS0966A Calcutta SUNDAY in English  
19 Jun 93 pp 12-13

[Article by Ketan Narottam Tanna: "The Right Choice"; italicized words as published]

[Text]

#### **L. K. Advani is Unanimously Elected BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] President Even as Factionalism Plagues the Sangh Parivar**

On 18 June, L. K. Advani will be back as the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). At the party's next national executive council meeting which begins in Bangalore on that date, Murli Manohar Joshi, the outgoing chief, will formally hand over charge to Advani from whom he had taken over in 1991.

The change of guard is expected to effect a change of mood within the party. In recent months, the BJP had been betraying signs of dissension and factionalism—things that were alien to its culture, BJP-watchers say that the party developed these traits under Joshi's stewardship and that the return of Advani will cement the fissures.

But Advani is re-assuming charge at a time when the country's political scenario has undergone considerable changes. During his earlier stint, the party had set itself the sole agenda of building the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, and Advani had succeeded in galvanising the saffron *parivar*—the BJP, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bajrang Dal and the Shiv Sena—towards achieving that goal.

Today, the BJP may not be able to exercise the same degree of control over its partners in the *parivar*. The demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6 December had shown that some of the BJP's allies, such as the VHP and the Sena, were inclined to act independently to the point of embarrassing the party. This became evident when both Advani and the party's other senior leader, Atal Behari Vajpayee, expressed initial remorse over the demolition, but Sena supremo Bal Thackeray openly took credit for it.

Besides, on the economic front, the Centre's policy of liberalisation and opening up to the West have added a new dimension to politics and the Ayodhya issue alone may not carry the BJP much farther. So, members of the party's executive council and Advani, in particular are saddled with the problem of getting their priorities right.

At the time of going to press, the BJP was still trying to finalise its agenda for the meet, with leaders offering different views. When asked for details, a prominent Delhi BJP leader told SUNDAY: "Go and ask those who are doing as they please. They should know." But despite the differences, the Ram Janmabhoomi issue was expected to dominate other matters.

The BJP's biggest problem at this juncture is not only to set its own house in order but to rework its equations with its allies. M. M. Joshi, the *sangh parivar* acknowledges, has contributed enough to remain one of the party's top-rankers. But as Advani takes over and the party draws up its balance sheet, it appears that during his tenure as president Joshi made several grave mistakes. For instance, he introduced the politics of factions in the *sangh parivar* which appears to have affected even the RSS.

Joshi had surmised that to have an effective control over the *sangh*, he had to have the VHP, Bajrang Dal and the RSS firmly behind him.

In his view, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal were to be the vehicles for carrying forward the populist interpretations of Hindutva. There were many in the RSS who agreed with this line. But there were others who were more far-sighted. They warned that if the sadhus, who were

mainly in the VHP's and the Bajrang Dal's fold, were given the upper hand, it would be impossible for the Sangh to shake off their hold in the future.

This debate, which went on in muted tones within the *sangh parivar*, had its fall-out. L. K. Advani came to be seen as the obvious alternative to Joshi and seniors within the RSS leadership made it clear that Advani was their choice for the post of BJP president. But others, who had accompanied Joshi on his Ekta Yatra in December, 1991, and January, 1992, realised how important the VHP and the Bajrang Dal could be for Hindutva and chose to back Joshi.

After months of intense lobbying, Joshi realised that his chances of becoming the party president again were indeed slim. So, he gave in and Advani was "unanimously" elected as the BJP president last fortnight.

The bitter infighting within the BJP was not limited to the top slots only. The party's organisational elections held recently led to open fracas in many places, exposing the factionalism that had crept in during Joshi's tenure.

- In Delhi, the police had to be called out in many places, including Kalkaji, Geeta colony and Ashok Vihar. At one stage, the returning officer for Delhi, Kalka Das, had threatened to resign. The elections were postponed for two days. And after hectic meetings—Kohli was elected "unanimously" as the president of the Delhi unit of the BJP.

In UP [Uttar Pradesh], agitations and even fighting broke out in places like Mathura, Meerut, Agra, Bulandshahar, Bijnor and Muzaffarnagar.

The Madhya Pradesh organisational elections were the worse of the lot. A few years ago, nobody would have dared to challenge a person of the stature of Kushabhau Thakre. Though, eventually, Thakre's nominee, Lakhiram Aggrawal, backed openly by Vijayraje Scindia won, the election was not without drama.

Dissidents, led by the former chief minister, Kailash Joshi, fell slightly short of mustering one-third of the electoral college in the state. Soon after his defeat, a bitter Kailash Joshi openly blamed Vijayraje Scindia and Thakre for his defeat. "I did not expect a person of Rajmata's stature as well as Thakre to intervene. But for them, I would have won," he told reporters.

Where does that leave L. K. Advani? the killing of Prem Kumar Sharma, the BJP MLA from Khetwadi (Maharashtra) and Shiv Sena MLC Ramesh More (see story on Page 8) has left the VHP itching to retaliate. That the ban on them has not been lifted gives them the freedom to work secretly—something that might create problems for the BJP.

Besides, there are serious differences between the BJP and the RSS on the question of launching Ayodhya-type agitations in Mathur and Varanasi. RSS chief Rajendra Singh has gone on record asking for the "liberation" of

the shrines at Mathura and Varanasi. But L. K. Advani, while releasing the BJP White Paper, denied emphatically that they were on the party's agenda.

As for the VHP, it sees the potential of doing another Ayodhya in these two UP towns, and the BJP led by Advani perceives a danger in this.

It is with such deep divisions among the members of the *sang parivar* that the BJP will hold its national executive council meeting and Advani will have to rework the party's strategy.

### Tremendous Boost

93AS0966B New Delhi INDIA TODAY in English  
30 Jun 93 pp 47-48

[Article by Yubaraj Ghimire With Zafar Agha: "BJP: A Shot in the Arm"]

[Text]

**A Tribunal Verdict Striking Down the Ban on the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] and Advani's Return as BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] President Have Come as a Tremendous Boost for the Sangh Brotherhood.**

The fireworks that exploded outside the RSS headquarters in Nagpur and its Jhandewalan office in New Delhi on June 4 symbolised the political bombshell behind the verdict of the P. K. Bahri Tribunal. Declaring the Government ban on the RSS illegal, the judicial pronouncement provided a timely shot in the arm for the Sangh brotherhood and a major political gain for the BJP and its Hindutva plank. The tribunal also lifted the ban on the Bajrang Dal, an extremist Hindu body allied to the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad], but stopped short of doing the same for the VHP for its role in the Ayodhya episode.

In political terms, the portents could not have been more ominous for the Narasimha Rao Government. Or more favourable for the BJP. Coinciding with the verdict was the embarrassing failure of the Congress(I)-inspired Som Yagya at Ayodhya, orchestrated by Rao's favourite godman, Chandra Swami (see box) [not reproduced]. To add to the political pressure was the election of L. K. Advani as BJP president for a two-year term, a strategic move to clinch the party's bid for power at the Centre.

The verdict of the tribunal, headed by Bahri, a Delhi High Court judge, was the most important in the series of 14 judicial verdicts by different courts in the country against the Government action banning the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal through its December 10 notification. The findings of the tribunal confirmed that the Government had bungled in not preparing a comprehensive case against the three Hindutva organisations. Even traditional BJP-baiters like CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] General Secretary H.K.S. Surjeet lashed out at the Government for having treated the case casually.

In Delhi, VHP President Vishnu Hari Dalmia declared: "The tribunal has now thrown the ball into the people's court and it is up to our patriotic people to take up the cause." Soon after the verdict was announced, RSS General Secretary H. V. Seshadri announced the commencement of the estimated 30,000 Sangh *shakhas*, the only activity that had been suspended during the 186-day ban.

Emboldened by the verdict, the ailing RSS chief Bala-saheb Deoras issued a statement from Jaslok Hospital in Bombay, demanding reinstatement of the four BJP state governments and lifting the ban on the VHP. "Any further continuation of the ban on it (VHP)—which is devoted to the moral, social and spiritual regeneration of the Hindus—would seriously offend their sentiments and amount to trampling upon their basic religious rights."

Advani was the man with the most cause for celebrating. By unseating the unpopular and acerbic Murli Manohar Joshi, whose 26-month tenure was marred by factionalism and leadership tussles, the BJP plans to regain its lost stature as a disciplined party. To make Advani's task easier, the RSS is to provide ideological training to all recruits drawn into the saffron movement in recent months. The BJP's Bangalore plenary next fortnight is expected to advocate strong action against those involved in factional fights and strict screening of new recruits. Since February 1991, the party's membership has risen to 95 lakh, an increase of 30 lakh.

The post-verdict strategy decided in Nagpur is that Sangh pracharaks will concentrate their efforts on the rural, backward and tribal areas. The BJP will consolidate its political gains and has chalked out plans for a mass campaign for reinstatement of the four dismissed BJP state governments based on the verdict of the Madhya Pradesh High Court last April.

As for Joshi's reaction to his ignominious ouster, the Advani group's assessment is that the outgoing party president does not enjoy more than 3 per cent support in the parliamentary party and so is unlikely to cause many problems. Atal Behari Vajpayee, who will take over as leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, has worked well with Advani in the past.

The duo, a formidable combination in Parliament, will according to party sources, concentrate on attacking the Rao Government, especially on corruption-related issues, with the aim of forcing a mid-term election. Their first salvo, when Parliament reopens for the monsoon session next month, will be to demand a debate on Article 356 and its alleged misuse by the Centre. "Let the Government gracefully accept the implications of the tribunal's verdict and make immediate amends for the series of crimes against the Constitution it committed last December—let it restore the assemblies and governments it has wrongly removed," says Advani.

But Advani's double-speak may not go down well with a section of the electorate. He has been steadfastly refusing

to apologise for having gone against the commitment given to the Supreme Court that the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh would protect the Babri Masjid. And now, in the wake of the tribunal's verdict, he has emerged as the biggest defender of the judiciary. He terms the verdict as "one more judicial slap on the face of the Government" and a "landmark in judicial history."

Politically, however, the signs point to a significant boost for the BJP. "There will be better cooperation and understanding between the BJP and the Sangh as Advani has always been taken more seriously by the RSS headquarters than Joshi even when he was the president," says a member of the Sangh Working committee. What could put a spanner in the works is the possible role of the increasingly aggressive sadhus. More so, in the context of [text omitted]

### Crucial Juncture

93AS0966C Cochin THE WEEK in English  
20 Jun 93 pp 36-40

[Article by Debashish Mukherjee: "The Importance of Being Advani"; quotation marks and italicized words as published]

[Text] Lal Krishna Advani is expected to do two things for the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] when he formally takes over as party president in Bangalore on June 16. One, tackle the vicious factionalism that has racked the party in recent months. Two, prepare the party for power at the Centre.

Two, prepare the party for power at the Centre.

Winning the general elections, which the BJP believes will be held next year, is no doubt the party's priority. But its immediate concern is to win back the four states where its governments were dismissed last December. And Advani is the best vote catcher the BJP has.

He is clearly the best equipped to galvanise the party in its first serious bid for power, and to press home the advantage gained in the past few years of championing the Hindutva cause. But with a major difference: toning down the stridency of his predecessor Murli Manohar Joshi and presenting a face of reasonableness to the electorate.

The party's crucial five-day session in Bangalore is likely to spell out clearly its stand on many ticklish, yet important, issues facing the country. The session may even see the setting up of a shadow cabinet with Advani as shadow prime minister, of course.

Two and a half years after he stepped down in early 1991, Lal Krishna Advani is back at the helm of the BJP, at what is easily the most crucial juncture in the party's history. "From 1952 till 1991 the Congress was the principal political party in the country. It was always the Congress v the rest. But we have turned the tables on the Congress. Today it is the BJP v the rest. Whether or not the rest join together, the BJP will now be the pivot around which any election will revolve. It is a historic



challenge and a great opportunity as well," noted senior BJP leader Sunder Singh Bhandari.

The reappointment of Advani is proof that the BJP—and the RSS parivar—is going all-out in its bid to convert the 'challenge and opportunity' into grand success. Elections to the assemblies of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, which are bound to be held later this year, will be the first step. And it will most probably be Advani who will lead the party into the next general election as well, even if the Rao government lasts the full term—which appears highly unlikely. (The BJP constitution allows the same person to continue as president for two consecutive terms).

Why Advani and not someone else? Why is he considered the BJP's best bet? "There is no doubt that Advani and Atal Behari Vajpayee are the only leaders in the party capable of drawing crowds. They tower over everyone else," said a BJP functionary. "In fact, the post was offered to Vajpayee but he declined for health reasons. However, he will take over as leader of the opposition from Advani, though there was pressure on Advani to retain the post."

"Advani was always known as a thinker and politician but the events of 1989 saw him acquire a charismatic halo as well," says Delhi BJP stalwart Vijay Kumar Malhotra. Journalist and BJP sympathiser, Dinanath Mishra, concurs: "Advani is straightforward, clear-headed, firm, and dynamic. He has a clean record and is an excellent parliamentarian." Said Bhandari: "He is the best of us all and extremely dynamic. Nobody denies that Murli Manohar Joshi did a good job, but it was felt that at the present juncture it would be better to have Advani as president."

The replacement of Joshi, after he had completed only one term has, however, raised eyebrows. Why was precedent set aside in his case? After all, both Vajpayee, who was president from 1980 (when the party was formed) to 1986, and Advani, who headed the party from 1986 to 1991, completed two consecutive terms. BJP leaders were reluctant to be quoted on the issue. But party supporter Mishra said: "The BJP needed a leader it could project as an alternative to Narasimha Rao as Prime Minister."

Obviously, that was not the only reason. The party's performance in the four states that it ruled till sometime ago and the factionalism also came in for scrutiny. The RSS leadership, it is said, felt that the BJP, under Joshi, did not make the expected progress. At the most, it could be said that the corruption in its governments were somewhat less than that in the Congress-ruled states. The party organisation too did not achieve the expected growth. The BJP was rapidly losing ground in these states and only the events of December 6 reversed the trend, was the RSS leadership's view.

The growth of factionalism was said to be an important reason why the party did not persist with Joshi. There

used to be differences of opinion in the BJP even earlier—even in the Jana Sangh for that matter—but they remained within control. However, the differences that cropped up in the last two years had little to do with ideology or issues and were centred around personalities and power. Murli Manohar Joshi, far from settling them, was seen trying to derive advantage. His hand was discerned in the Uma Bharati—Sunderlal Patwa feud in Madhya Pradesh. The then general secretary, Govindacharya, chose to meddle, leading to rumours about a romantic liaison between him and the sanyasin. The affair ended with Govindacharya being exiled to Madras.

Then former chief minister V. K. Saklecha was propped up against Patwa, allegedly with Joshi's full backing. Even the recent organisational elections in MP were an acrimonious affair with widespread charges of rigging. Joshi was also said to be behind the ham-handed attempt, last year, to discredit the then UP [Uttar Pradesh] chief minister Kalyan Singh by alleging—in the RSS journal *Panchjanya* of all places—that his principal secretary and trusted bureaucrat Nripendra Mishra was a CIA agent.

BJP unity took another beating during the recent revolt in the Delhi unit against president O. P. Kohli being renominated for a second term. Also, a letter written by Govindacharya to the late Bhaurau Deoras last year was 'leaked' to the press.

"In each of these cases, and others, Joshi played a questionable role," said a party insider. Said another Joshi opponent: "He comes from UP where politics has always revolved around money and power, and backstabbing is normal. Joshi tried to introduce this sort of politics at the national level in the BJP. Since his presidentship coincided with the entry of a very large number of newcomers, unschooled in the RSS culture, his machinations did succeed to an extent."

Ideology must surely have played a part in fuelling the factionalism. Joshi is said to represent the 'hardline' faction while Advani and Vajpayee are considered 'soft-liners.' The events of December 6, and the belligerence displayed by the party thereafter, culminating in the aborted rally in Delhi on February 25, seemed to indicate that the hardliners were in the ascendant.

Then how did the moderate Advani suddenly assume control? According to an insider, "the decision to remove Joshi was taken long before December 6. Had the Ayodhya structure not been demolished, the present Bangalore plenary would have been held in January itself, and Joshi removed."

The RSS was not happy about December 6. Not because of the bloody fall-out but because its authority had been bypassed. However, the overwhelming Hindu response to the demolition came as a surprise to the RSS leaders. "In the circumstances, it would have been politically suicidal for them to express regret or dismay. So they kept quiet. Meanwhile, the ban imposed on the RSS and

the dismissal of the BJP-led state governments, led to the Sangh Parivar closing ranks. The aborted rally in Delhi, for instance, had the backing of all sections. But that did not mean that the RSS had forgiven Joshi for his misdemeanours, nor that it would allow December 6 to be repeated," according to the insider.

BJP leaders were unanimous in the view that the recent media emphasis on hardliners and softliners had been overdone. Said one of them: "In their basic outlook they are the same. Vajpayee is supposed to be softest of softliners. But he has written poems which agonised over the Muslim conquests and Hindu defeats of Medieval India."

"We all feel the hurt about Muslim domination, and want to reaffirm lost Hindu glory. But that does not mean making statements of the kind Joshi made. He called the army units sent to Ayodhya an 'occupation army.' He disowned all responsibility for any untoward incidents that might occur during the February 25 rally. This was never part of the BJP-RSS culture. What was worse, in reality he is no extremist. He was just saying these things to project himself," said the BJP leader.

"There are hardliners in the RSS-BJP. Ashok Singhal may be called a hardliner but not Joshi," said a Sangh Parivar watcher. "No man interested in promoting himself can have a firm line of thought. But Ashok Singhal would have preferred Joshi who, given his vanity, can be manipulated to do his bidding," he added.

In fact, Singhal is said to have taken Advani's nomination badly. At an RSS meeting in Bombay he directly attacked general secretary Rajendra Singh (Rajju Bhaiya) for having finalised the nomination without sufficient consultations with other RSS leaders.

With Advani now firmly in the saddle, most former Joshi supporters are trying hard to worm their way into his confidence. A number of BJP leaders excused themselves when asked to enumerate Joshi's successes and failures. But a few die-hard Joshi supporters did speak up. Said one of them: "When Joshi took over there was no doubt about the difference in stature between him and Advani. And Advani expected Joshi to be a rubber stamp president. The animosity started when Joshi began asserting himself. Advani, like a typical Delhi politician, began to lobby against him. Joshi, a newcomer to Delhi, had no lobby of his own to hit back."

On the charge that Joshi encouraged dissidence, his supporter said: "That is true to some extent. Certain state BJP leaders had grown accustomed to regarding their respective states as their *jagirs*. The RSS tradition of unquestioning obedience to one's superior also helped them to abuse their powers. Joshi tried to put a stop to this, deciding issues on merit rather than the stature of the persons involved."

There were genuine policy differences between the two leaders, especially on Ayodhya and economic matters. "Joshi felt that since we came to power on the temple

issue that was our supreme consideration. Advani felt that having won power in four states we should consolidate, instead of rushing ahead with the temple and sacrificing the UP government.

"On economic issues, Advani seems to think that no party can rule this country if the United States is totally opposed to it. He would like to appease the U.S., invite multinationals. International image is very important to him. Joshi believes that we need not bother about what America wants, for we are not some South American banana republic. He is a strong proponent of the swadeshi movement and would like to place curbs on multinationals," the Joshi supporter said.

The immediate challenge that Advani faces is that of curbing factionalism. A step in this direction has already been taken by the Delhi unit where both Vijay Malhotra and S. C. Khurana, who strongly opposed Kohli, have been included in the working committee.

Advani will also have to take the initiative in increasing the party's acceptability among sections hostile to it. Says Dinanath Mishra: "At present the BJP is acceptable to only about 50 per cent of the population. Besides Muslims, states like Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal, Kerala and the north eastern region are not willing even to consider us." Echoed Vijay Malhotra: "Being politically isolated, we will need more than 50 per cent of all votes to come to power against a combined opposition. To do that we have to win over at least some portions of the sections opposed to us such as Muslims and Harijans. We must convince them that we mean no harm."

The third major challenge is—preparedness. The BJP may well come to power in the absence of any alternative—the Congress is rapidly losing credibility and the non-Congress opposition is a fragmented lot. "But is it ready to take on the responsibility? Has it worked out what it is going to do about the economy? Does it have a realistic foreign policy?" asks a sympathiser. The BJP thinktanks should perhaps set up a shadow cabinet and familiarise themselves with the details of administration. Or else the country will be caught between an inept Congress and an unprepared BJP.

#### Mass leader

93AS0966D Cochin THE WEEK in English  
20 Jun 93 pp 38-39

[Article by Debashish Mukherjee: "Total Transformation"]

[Text] The most striking feature of L. K. Advani is his transformation from an erudite, reflective and highly respected politician into a controversial mass leader. For most of his political career he was a member of the Rajya Sabha, contesting a Lok Sabha seat for the first time in November 1989.

Suave and upright, he always seemed to give the impression of being a little distant from the hurly-burly of

street-level politics. Advani preferred to concern himself with deeper issues relating to the political system, and has been a long-time advocate of electoral reforms. Since 1989, however, he has effectively proved that he is just as capable of arousing mass passions as any other demagogue. His controversial rath yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya in October 1991 marking the high point of this metamorphosis.

Born on November 5, 1927, in Hyderabad (Sindh), now in Pakistan, Advani belonged to an upper middle class urban family. He was educated at St. Patrick's School in Karachi and at the DG National College, Hyderabad (Sindh). In college through a tennis partner came his introduction to the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh]—which resulted in a long commitment. Those were also the final years of the British rule in India, when the movement for independence was at its height.

But, in the words of an associate: "Advani was somehow not very impressed by the technique of non-violence adopted by the Congress. The party's ambivalent attitude towards the Muslim League was also not acceptable to him. Perhaps, the real reason which attracted him to the RSS was the claustrophobic condition in which Hindus found themselves in the overwhelmingly Muslim province of Sindh."

His commitment to the RSS soon grew deep that he chucked what would have led to a staid but extremely lucrative career: He was admitted into the NFD [expansion not given] engineering college in Karachi, but did not join. Instead, he devoted himself full-time to the RSS. (Much later, in mid-career, he obtained a law degree from Bombay university).

Given his innate abilities and his dedication to the RSS, his efforts were soon recognised and amply rewarded. In 1947, he was the RSS secretary (*karyavah*) of Karachi city, assisting in the migration of thousands of Hindu families to India. His own family too crossed over into Rajasthan where he became a *pracharak* of the state.

He joined the Jana Sangh as soon as it was formed, remaining its Rajasthan state secretary from 1952 to 1957. In 1958, he moved to Delhi and became its Delhi unit secretary. He was also simultaneously secretary to Atal Behari Vajpayee, who was leader of the Jana Sangh in the Lok Sabha.

He turned to journalism in 1960, as joint editor of the *Organiser* weekly, where his regular columns 'Delhi Dairy' and 'Periscope' proved very popular. K. R. Malkani, who was to head the *Organiser* later, recalls: "It was his question at a press conference which elicited from Dr. Homi Bhabha in 1965 the information that if the Indian government chose to, it could develop an atom bomb within two years." It was in 1965, too, that he married Kamala Jagtiani. They have two children.

But journalism could not hold Advani for long. His first love was always politics. In 1967 he was elected chairman of the Delhi Metropolitan Council, in 1970 he

became a member of the Rajya Sabha. Three years later he was made national president of the Rajya Sabha and in 1974 leader of the Jana Sangh in the Rajya Sabha. It was under his leadership that the party plunged full scale into the 'total revolution' struggle launched by JP.

Advani's abiding interest in electoral reforms dates from this time too. As Malkani has noted: "He was the first man to point out that our electoral system is unfair, where a party with just 40 per cent of the total votes can win 70 per cent of the seats." He preferred the 'list system' in use in many European countries.

Came the emergency and Advani was among the first to be arrested, on June 25, 1975, along with Vajpayee, Madhu Dadavate and Shyam Nandan Mishra in Bangalore where they had gone to attend a meeting of the joint select committee on the Anti-Defection Bill. He was released only in January 1977 on the eve of the general elections. While in prison Advani wrote political and constitutional commentaries which were circulated as underground literature then. These were later collected and published as a *Prisoner's Scrapbook* after his release.

His re-election to the Rajya Sabha in 1976—while still in prison—was marked by much drama, as his supporters had to repeatedly move the courts to enable him to file his nomination papers. Even so he was able to take the oath only after Indira Gandhi had been defeated in 1977.

During the Janata period Advani won accolades all round for his performance as information and broadcasting minister. He dismantled the repressive apparatus set up to curb the press during the emergency: abolishing press censorship, repealing the infamous Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Act, and restoring advertisements to blacklisted newspapers. His only regret, he has since maintained, was that he did not give complete autonomy to the electronic media immediately. By the time the Verghese Committee submitted its report recommending autonomy, the Janata government had gone out of power.

After the fall of the Janata government, the Jana Sangh segment separated from the Janata Party [JD] to set up the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] in April 1980. The next election, after Indira Gandhi's assassination, saw the party almost wiped out, winning only two seats in the Lok Sabha. The spectacular recovery to a position where it is poised to capture power at the Centre took place primarily under Advani's earlier terms as president from 1986 to 1991.

### Seeks To Restore Credibility

93AS0966E Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English  
18 Jun 93 p 11

[Article by S. Nihal Singh: "Unfit for Polite Company"; italicized words as published]

[Text] Mr L. K. Advani assumes the presidency of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] at an interesting point in



the life of his party and the country. His two year term will determine whether the BJP will botch its chance of coming to power at the Centre or will reach within striking distance.

Mr Advani faces two sets of problems, his own credibility and the need to reposition his party more to the centre of the political spectrum. These are formidable problems and the president of the BJP will need all his *savoir faire* as he sets about squaring the circle.

In 1990 the country discovered there are two Advanis. There was the suave, responsible politician fit to assume the prime ministership. Then there was the rabble rousing Hindu leader zestfully riding a Toyota van dressed as a chariot seemingly, unmindful of the trial of death his *rath yatra* left in its wake.

Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh was then the obliging prime ministers who let Mr Advani drive across the breadth of the country before acting to terminate the journey. But Mr Advani was decidedly enthusiastic about setting the countryside ablaze. As he explained it, the BJP had suddenly discovered it had made the transition from a largely urban based party to one with a following in rural India where the majority lived.

This other Mr Advani was again in evidence at Ayodhya on December 6 last year to witness the demolition of the Babri Masjid. He expressed some contriteness over the deed and announced his resignation as leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha. But the resignation issue was fudged as the BJP collected its wits and in a sense justified what had happened.

As president of the BJP Mr Advani will want the people to forget his other self. He would wish to present himself to the country as a wise politician. Perhaps he is counting on public memory being short. After all Indira Gandhi was forgiven her Emergency and returned to power.

Mr Advani's test will lie in how far he succeeds in reshaping the BJP into a credible party fit to govern India. He faces three kinds of problems enhanced by the prevailing confusion in the party's ranks. He needs to discipline the free wheeling *sang parivar*. He must find a balance between the abrasive Hindu agenda and the demands of governing a multiethnic and multireligious country. He must provide a coherent philosophy for the party beyond the slogans and the wild ideas of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] gurus.

Mr Advani is not entirely a free agent in coping with these tasks. Although he and many of his colleagues belong to the RSS stock the present RSS leadership's zealotry in guiding the BJP to its concept of Hindu *rashtra* means the Nagpur organisation is a power factor to contend with. M Balasaheb Deoras's prevailing illness and his designated successor's assumption of the office of *sarvasanghchalak* add to the uncertainties. But Mr Advani will need the full backing of the RSS hierarchy in reforming his party.

While the role of the RSS is reasonably clear the BJP's relationship with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP] and the Bajrang Dal has been determined by circumstances rather than design. The VHP served a useful purpose in propagating the Ram temple issue until the BJP was ready to espouse it. In the task of mobilising people for the cause the Bajrang Dal provided the workers who were ready to use force and threats to serve the party.

To an extent it is useful to have allied organisations articulating more extremist positions than the BJP feels politic to propagate. Since the Bajrang Dal is a separate organisation its cadres' strongarm methods are not the responsibility of the BJP. At the same time these organisations and the RSS form together with the BJP the *sang parivar*. The BJP will find it difficult to escape the consequences of their actions.

A striking illustration is the VHP's articulation of the demand for doing an Ayodhya in Mathura and Varanasi. Bringing up this question does not suit the BJP at this time.

The BJP knows it has struck a chord among large sections of Hindus in North India by propagating a Hindu consciousness. Its ability to weave strands of this consciousness into a religious and nationalist amalgam comes at a time the world is changing out of recognition. But the success it has achieved has come at the price of the crudest forms of Muslim baiting encouraged by Mr Advani's *rath yatra*.

If the BJP wants to imitate the Pakistan experiment born out of the two nation theory by creating a theocratic India it is crying for the moon. The sheer size of Muslims and other minorities would militate against such an attempt. If force were to be used the BJP would discover there will be no India left to govern.

The BJP needs to reconcile its compulsion to redefine nationalism in Hindu colours with the reality of India. For one thing Mr Advani will don responsible clothes but such a change will hardly be adequate in reassuring minorities or making people think the BJP will be a responsible governing party.

In tackling the third problem Mr Advani will find that the BJP is a victim of its own unexpected success. Looking back, the BJP's journey from two seats in the Lok Sabha to becoming the main opposition party and bagging four states has been an incredible one. Doubtless exceptional circumstances, including the other opposition parties' single minded resolve to displace the Congress, aided the process.

Now the BJP believes that it has a chance to achieve power in the next general election. It is time to sift the verbiage and evolve a BJP philosophy for the future. Adolf Hitler might have his admirers in the party. Elements in the BJP might believe the country's 120 million Muslims should be sent to Pakistan. But they are unlikely to provide a reliable guide to a philosophy.

Perhaps the albatross around the BJP's neck is the widely held perception that as India approaches the 21st century the party is all set to take the country back to the Middle Ages. Seeking solace in religious and ethnic particularism as people search for roots is a phenomenon of our times. We see in regions like the former Yugoslavia to where extreme forms of religious and nationalist jingoism lead to.

The question Mr Advani needs to ask himself is whether in his quest for power he is willing to sacrifice the unity and integrity of the Indian nation state. Of course he might well come to the conclusion defining a BJP philosophy is asking for trouble, so contradictory are the pulls and demands of his constituents. Muddling through is always an option, but it is not a reliable route to success.

### Leading Anti-Corruption Campaign

93AS0966F Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English  
18 Jun 93 p 9

[Article by Subrata Sen: "BJP Likely To Make Scam Man Plank for Elections"]

[Text] Bangalore, June 15—With Mr Harshad Mehta's threat to reveal the names of the Congress(I) dignitaries who had received scam pay-offs, the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] seems to have found, at last, its main plank for the next general elections.

The session of the BJP national executive and the national council meeting scheduled to begin here tomorrow will see a change not only of leadership but also in strategy. Before the president-elect, Mr L. K. Advani, takes over from Mr Murli Manohar Joshi on June 18, the party will finalize its strategy for the forthcoming elections in the four States previously ruled by the BJP and discuss how to force a mid-term poll sometime early next year.

Realizing that the multi-crore securities scam might land the Congress(I) in a much tighter spot than the Bofors scandal had done earlier, the BJP has more, or less decided to shift its focus from the Ayodhya issue to the more sharply focused one of "fighting the corruption of the Government."

"In this Government, corruption is omnipresent. We have to fight it out," Mr J. P. Mathur, the all-India secretary of the party, said today. The party will launch a formal attack on the Government and its first direct attack on the Prime Minister even if Mr Mehta decides not to reveal any names, says Mr Mathur, for "everyone knows that Mr Mehta could not have operated without the political support of the ruling party."

"In Bofors, it was Rajiv Gandhi and his family, while here it is Mr Rao and his family," says Mr Mathur.

The BJP leadership is of the opinion that with the return of Mr Advani as party president, a shift from the rabid

Hindutva line to a more refined political attack on the Congress(I) may click for the party.

In fact, in an informal conversation with reporters, Mr Advani indicated that his primary task would be to "clean" the anti-minority image of the party. The BJP's "social charter," which formalizes its stand on the minorities and the backward classes of the country, is to be brought in as a resolution at the national council meeting.

Despite the efforts to project a "sober image," the growing indiscipline among the rank and file is worrying the leaders, who admit that, with the BJP's transformation from a cadre-based party to a mass-based one, several contradictions have crept into the organization. The December 6 incident, which resulted in the demolition of the Babri Masjid, was a glaring manifestation of this and the party is yet to recover from the damage done to its image on that day.

Though the need for inculcating discipline among the cadres is high on the agenda of the national executive meeting, party leaders are ruling out any disciplinary action against any member for the time being. "These things are to be taken up at the State-levels," said a senior BJP leader. "We hardly have any time to discuss specific issues at present."

UNI adds: In a calculated attempt to thwart the Centre's move to impede the BJP's march towards power in the next elections by bringing about a legislation to ban the use of religion in politics, the BJP has revived its old card of "Ram rajya" after five years.

"We have to strive hard to give a clean administration by establishing Ram rajya in the country," Mr Advani said, emphasizing that the party's aim was not just to grab power at the Centre or to send more representatives to the Parliament and the State Assemblies.

### Dismal National Political Scene Viewed, Critiqued

93AS1116B Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi  
20 Jul 93 p 4

[Commentary by Naresh Singh Pundir: "India Facing Identity Crisis"]

[Text] In order to understand the Indian people, we must understand four phenomena (reference to Suryakant Bali's article, "Requirements of Understanding India," NAVBHARAT TIMES, 8 February 1993). These four phenomena are: 1) the total neglect of India's largest religious group—the Hindus—by all non-BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] political parties; 2) exploitation of the second largest religious group—the Muslims—by all political parties in order to strengthen their vote banks and the adoption of a policy of a pacification; at the same time, there is neglect of Muslims by fundamentalist Hindu parties; 3) the infusion of cultural and scientific

thought; and 4) understanding of the citizen's character in the context of the relationship between the government and the society.

The fact is that the Indian society is entangled in a kind of identity crisis. It has determined neither a direction nor analyzed the situation. It is not possible to make any forecast or prognosis. It is important for us to understand the four conditions that Mr. Bali mentioned in his article in order to understand Indian society. However, what approach to use to understand this relationship is a subject for analysis. In the context of the first phenomenon, we can say that except for the political parties supporting Hinduism, all parties have tried to use Muslims as their vote bank. This fact is clarified by the Communist Party (M) and the various efforts at unity and separation between the Muslim League and the Congress Party. They tried to endorse each other at one time and accused each other at another. At the same time, as a result of this, the BJP and other fundamentalist Hindu parties pushed Hindu society to such extremes that we have to bear an incident like Ayodhya.

The Hindu society has the caste system embedded in its structure. Instead of being based on qualities, actions, and cooperation, the caste system is based on exploitation. The slow disappearance of this old Hindu system from rural Indian society points toward this tendency. Urbanization and industrialization have also played parts in ending this system; however, the main reason was inappropriate support by the castes that were served for the castes that served. There are many other facts which point toward the practice of exploitation. For example, the scheduled castes are still being persecuted and exploited in villages. They are weighed down by loans. Incidents of their woman being raped occur often. Changing caste is not possible today as was in the earlier part of the history. A young man of a socially low caste tried to marry a girl of a higher caste in a Mathura village, and the harijan boy was hanged in broad daylight. This made headlines in the newspapers and nothing was done. Social research also supports the fact that the land lost by higher caste people because of land reform laws, which was distributed among lower caste people, was banned from use by the higher caste people. Their crops were destroyed. Many efforts were made to threaten and scare them.

If we look from the same philosophical perspective at India's 85 percent Hindu population, then this fact has no basis. In the 1990 Vidhan Sabha election, a candidate was elected from the reserved Vidhan Sabha constituency of Devtalab in the Rewa district. After observation and analysis of the elections, it was learned that most of the people who supported the BJP were from lower castes or were Muslims. The reason was clear. In this region, the social and economic situations of both these groups were equal.

The second phenomenon relates to the Muslim community. In India, Muslims are the most persecuted and exploited group. They have to face triple jeopardy. On

one side, they have to face the anger of fundamentalist Hindu groups. On the other, the political parties have continuously exploited them to strengthen their vote bank. Third, Muslim religious leaders have always scared them about their situation in India being unsafe, and that of a second class citizen. We doubt that anyone has paid attention to their healthy development and the positive aspects of life. Today, the social, economic, educational, and political advancement of Muslims has come to a total standstill.

Most of India's imams, mullahs, and maulvis act in order to keep the mullahs and maulvis in Islamic nations happy. Why would Abdullah Bukhari go to the Pakistani embassy to talk after the Ayodhya incident? In order to maintain their political and economic position, Muslim economic leaders either remain quiet on Muslim issues or support their religious leaders. The reason is that they fear that, if the Muslim population prospers, then this group would become competitive. Even a common Muslim would be able to obtain a higher position in society. In this context, a few other facts need to be mentioned.

The Muslims of Islamic countries, including those of Pakistan, give less respect to Indian Muslims, because they live in a non-Muslim nation. Indian girls that are married to Pakistanis are not given proper respect in most families. The wealthy Muslims of Islamic nations buy minor Indian girls in the name of marriage and take them to their countries, where they are persecuted and used for bestial sexual activities. Children from India are taken to Arabia to be used in camel races for the entertainment of the rich there. The Memon brothers, involved in the Bombay bomb blasts, fled to Dubai, and then to Pakistan. Ten people belonging to the Kerala Art Lovers Group were sentenced to six years in jail for staging a play in Sharjah.

Muslim political and religious leaders have to reconsider Muslim society, which is entangled in an identity crisis. Will they keep this huge group ignorant of knowledge, science, and modern ideas just to maintain their false equality to the Arab world?

The third phenomenon relates to the fact that the Hindu community has, to an extent, accepted the convergence of science and culture. The Muslim community, however, is totally separated from scientific thinking. To an extent, the Hindu community is responsible for this. The minorities (Muslims) of Indian society have adopted the values and social practices of the majority (Hindu) community. In other words, they are exhibiting an acculturation phenomenon. The majority culture, however, has very limited contact with their [Muslims] lifestyles. This is the emerging form of discrimination, which is causing fear among Muslims. If temples are destroyed in Pakistan, then the Indian community raises a hue and cry. However, Hindus do not allow their Muslim brothers to build mosques in rural areas. The Muslim community has made unprecedented contributions to the advancement of small-scale industry. Be it



Merrut's looms and scissors, Aligharh's locks, Muradabad's utensils, or any other skill or industry, we doubt that Hindus ever tried to learn any of these skills. The chasm of hatred is so deep that both communities have forgotten that their roots are right here in India. The difference is only in religion.

Today, the Indian national community is on the brink of autocratic democracy. Words and phrases like "secularism," "democratic socialism," "rights and duties included in the constitution," and "discrimination through reservations" all appear to be meaningless. Politicians are pulling each others' legs in the greed for votes and power. Indian society has given its silent blessing to the waste of billions of rupees in party conventions, corruption worth billions of rupees in the stock market, and high-tech bomb blasts because of communal strife.

No doubt, in order to understand the Indian society, these four phenomena must be understood internally and from the outside. Only then can a healthy society be built. However, Indian society today is entangled in the vicious cycle of identity. A half-baked version of progress is in front of us. We cannot give up our greed for power. The people are dissatisfied. They are trying to understand this vicious cycle and want to break it; however, we doubt that they will be successful in doing so. According to Suryakant Bali, it is not easy to understand India, and there is no option to understand it, especially for the thinkers and schools of thought that want to help India prosper.

#### Revision of 'Outmoded' Constitution Recommended

93AS1047B Madras DINAMANI in Tamil 20 Jul 93 p 4

[Commentary by K. B. Arravannan, Central University Pondichery: "Let's Make a New 'Rule'; Thought Provoking Series To Which Prominent Analysts Contribute"]

[Text] "Is it the same country that produced Mahatma Gandhi Rabindernath Tagore and Aurobindo Gosh?"

This is how Ananthamoorthi, the author of *SAMASKARA*—a world renowned novel expresses his anguish and distress at the state of affairs in the country. If we honestly ponder over the question quietly, the answer may be the one that reinforces the novelist's view. True it is, that all well-meaning people are indeed, upset and weep deep inside about the current condition.

The Constitution of India has a major role in guiding us and also misleading us and creating a mess. The Constitution was framed by the constituent assembly, which first met on 9 December 1946. It took three long years to draft the document, with a number of legal luminaries playing a major role in the task. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the president of India, signed the Constitution on 26 November 1949. On 26 January 1950, the Constitution officially came to be the law of the land. It is now nearly

forty-four years since we adopted it. The Constitution has been guiding the nation, just like a rail engine. The basic question is whether the Constitution has been taking us in the right path to reach our goal.

We have been toiling with so many vexing problems, which plagued us during the pre-independence days and also post-independence days. They are: 1. Caste that has been separating us into groups. 2. Religion that has been dividing us into various islands. 3. Languages which have erected wall-like divisions among us. Our Constitution is the one drafted in a free India. But was it able to solve the basic problems? In fact, it has caused a flare-up of the vexing problems and even nurtured some of them to grow like huge banyan trees.

India's population is divided into so many castes and communities on the basis of birth and faith. Has the Constitution found any solution to this complex problem? On the public platforms leaders proclaim loudly that there should not be any division on the basis of birth and caste. But the Constitution has perpetuated the reservation on the basis of birth and caste. In the beginning it was made mandatory that seats in the legislatures and parliament should be reserved on the basis of caste for a period of ten years. In reality, what happened? The concessions were not stopped at the end of the ten-year period. They are still alive, without any end in sight. These concessions should not have been based exclusively on caste at birth, but should have other bases as well. But it did not happen. What exactly is the result? Instead of the much proclaimed goal of creating a casteless society in the last fifty years, a society based on castes has gained an upper hand.

There has been a fight, just like the Mahabharat war, though going on silently between the castes with concessions and other castes without that privilege.

Instead of helping the country to get rid of the caste problems, the Constitution has put the country into a deeper mess of complex communalism.

Next comes religion. India has been, in the past, the home of so many great philosophies. Just like ancient civilisations of Egypt, Greece, and China, Indian soil has produced so many great thinkers, who have enriched the world with valuable ideas on life. But yet, in its long history, the sad age of how religions have been dividing people has become an unforgettable aspect.

In 1947, our country was partitioned on the basis of religion. At least after this partition, did we become wiser?

Did our experts on the constitution, while giving a shape to it ever bear in their mind the contemporary scars and wounds created by religious upheavals? It appears they did not.

"Minority rights" just like rats were wrapped up in the gunny bag called Constitution.

Our electoral system also played a major role in creating this state of affairs. It was counterproductive, as it resulted in the emergence of majority religions' fundamentalism in our country.

In India, we have 4,635 social classes, engaged in 354 trades of different kinds. The people speak 3,251 languages belonging to 12 major linguistic families. They have adopted 24 kinds of forms of lettering. These facts and figures are published in the Anthropological Survey of India report 1.2.1993. No wonder India is a plural society with so many different cultures, religions, and languages. In the case of such a wide subcontinent, extending in area up to thousands of square kilometers, the geographical factors are bound to be of such a kind.

These factors were considered by the framers of our Constitution. But they failed to make the right decision. In Singapore, there are three major languages—Malay, Chinese, and Tamil—spoken by its people. When the constitution was being drawn up, Lee Quan Lee made a clear decision that English should be the link language of the state. He did not choose his own mother tongue—Chinese—or the language spoken by the majority of the people in the state and jeopardize the future of his state. In countries like Switzerland, the general welfare of the nation as a whole commanded the highest priority in making major decisions. In our country where 325 languages are spoken, English should have been the link language. But instead, they declared that Hindi with Devnagri script, spoken by a section of the people, as the official language of the country. All other languages were subjected to step-motherly treatment and this resulted in making the language problem more tough and complex.

Another great calamity that happened on the language front is the division of states on the basis of languages. The first seventeen and one-half years of free India, the Indian rule looked like a replica of the Soviet federation of states. As the Russian language reigned supreme in the Soviet Union, Hindi occupied the position of eminence. Just like the Soviet Union was divided into various nationalities, our country also was divided into various states in 1958.

Before the advent of independence, we were plagued with so many problems based on caste, religion, and language. The Constitution has not solved any of them. In fact, it further makes the problems worse and more complicated. To add to them, the constitution also introduced a new complicated problem, namely party politics.

With the blessings of our Constitution, our people were divided on the basis of caste, religion, and language. Now comes another powerful factor—the party, to the list. Instead of identifying Indians as Indians, it began to identify every Indian, not only as one who belongs to such and such caste, religion, and language, but also as one who belongs to such and such party. Thus the party politics won a great victory in further dividing the Indians into so many groups.

Three wings, devised by our Constitution—Parliament, executive, and judiciary—are not functioning independently as they should. They all function according to the party politics. And party politics has determined the outcome of the elections. The elections are not based on service and honesty but only on caste, religion, language, and also the power of wealth.

As money has become the first and foremost motivating factor, bribery and irregularity have become unavoidable. In our country, after the nationalization of the banks, the only other nationalization that has taken place is that of bribery and irregularities. Even when one is identified as committing an irregularity, his affiliation to his caste, religion, language, and party blind us to the truth.

On a careful review of the working of our Constitution, it is clear that it was not based on the true nature, well being of the people, and the ability to solve their vital problems. Instead of helping us at a time when we were already drowning, the constitution led us only to a complete drowning. To remedy this trend, an alternative is immediately necessary. Today we find that the Soviet states, South American countries, and African countries have already begun the process of revising their constitutions according to their needs. It is imperative that we also embark upon such a move very swiftly. Otherwise, there is no hope of salvation at all for us.

#### Jayalalitha's Fast Critiqued, Talk Recommended

93AS1047A Madras DINAMANI in Tamil 20 Jul 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Jayalalitha's Fast"]

[Text] Jayalalitha had embarked upon an indefinite fast to protest against the Central Government's failure to make the Karnataka State government implement the interim ruling given by the impartial tribunal for Cauvery. On 25 June 1991, the tribunal gave its ruling that Karnataka should release for Tamil Nadu 205 TMC of water every year in the Cauvery river.

In order to prevent the implementation of this decision, the then chief minister of Karnataka Bangarappa issued an ordinance. And then came the constitutional crisis. So the president of India asked the Supreme Court to review the ordinance issued by the Karnataka State and the ruling given by the Cauvery Tribunal. The Supreme Court gave its opinion that the ordinance was not at all valid and the interim ruling of the tribunal should be carried out. The court also said that the interim ruling should be published in the gazette of India. Accordingly it was published in the gazette.

Then the prime minister, who personally accepted the responsibility of finding a amicable solution to the water dispute, did not make any move. The efforts of Jayalalitha and her Tamil Nadu government were to no avail. The chief minister recently sent a letter to the Minister for Water resources at the Center suggesting that a central water resources committee should be appointed

to supervise and monitor Karnataka's release of water for Tamil Nadu in the Cauvery river. This letter also did not receive any response. Again on 11 June 1993, Jayalalitha addressed a letter to the prime minister pleading that he should intervene and make the Karnataka release water for Tamil Nadu. This letter also was put in the deep freeze.

This is another example of inaction on the part of the Narasimha Rao government. This finally resulted in Jayalalitha losing faith in the center. The President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, Vazhaippaddi Ramamurthy urged the Central Government to immediately intervene in the state as the law and order situation had deteriorated to a grave level. This is the same person who declared earlier that he wholeheartedly supported the fast. No other example is needed to illustrate the political opportunism played by the Tamil Nadu congress.

This almost proves that the Central Government is attempting to intervene in the state, taking advantage of the situation created by the fast. The Central Government should not embark upon any such move. At the same time, it should also publicly reprimand Ramamurthy for his call for Central intervention in the state. All that the Central Government could do is to make both the state governments resume negotiations for an amicable solution to the problem in accordance with the interim ruling of the tribunal. The solution should also give due consideration to the problems of Karnataka, caused by drought in the state. In the meantime, it is necessary that adequate precautionary measures be undertaken by both the Karnataka and Tamil Nadu governments to prevent any outbreak of violence, similar to the one that erupted during December 1991.

#### Communists Seen Bidding To Join Mainstream

93AS1125A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA  
in English 22 Jul 93 p 9

[Article by Sumanta Sen: "Communists' Bid To Join Mainstream"]

[Text] Calcutta, July 21. The Union government has appointed three sub-committees to organise the golden jubilee celebrations of the "Quit India" movement in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, to be headed by Mr Sharad Pawar, Mr Chandra Shekhar and Mr Jyoti Basu, respectively. While the first two names hold out little surprise, Mr Basu's does.

The Centre obviously thought that as the chief minister of West Bengal, Mr Basu had to head the committee but what about Mr Basu himself? Will he be expected to praise a movement which his party, then the undivided CPI [Communist Party of India], had never supported?

Even today, Marxist ideologues like EMS Namboodiripad take great pains to explain why the party's stand was correct in 1942.

Mr Basu's consent to head the committee appears to be in keeping with the communists' bid to become a part of the nationalist mainstream, to secure a toe-hold in the Hindi heartland. As part of this bid, the party has already admitted that it was a grave error to dub Subhash Chandra Bose a quisling after he had joined hands with the Japanese against the British.

These days Mr Basu religiously attends every birth anniversary celebration of Subhash Bose. Recently, he sent a message to his Manipur counterpart condemning the damage caused to the late leader's statue at Moirang in that state and demanded its immediate repair. It is relevant to note that Subhash Bose's Forward Bloc is an important constituent of the ruling Left Front.

All these gestures may be sound politics but what about the Marxists' ideological position? In 1942, the CPI had correctly assessed the danger from fascism and the need to counter it first before taking on British imperialism.

Of course, the communists then had not been able to properly explain their stand to a people who looked on Hitler as a kind of redeemer and who rejoiced at every bomb dropped on London. But the failure does not take away anything of its merit.

Unfortunately nobody bothered to expose the role of the Congress leadership in 1942. Is it any secret that the "Quite India" call was given in a desperate bid to counter the impression that the Congress had no more messages for the nation?

Pandit Nehru himself shared the communists' perception of Hitler and Mussolini but decided to go along with the others in his party so as not to be the odd man out. And the entire leadership had sighed in relief when the call was followed by their detention at the Aga Khan palace as that lifted from their shoulders the responsibility of conducting a movement of which they had not formulated any idea.

Indeed, the entire movement would not perhaps have got off the ground but for socialists like Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, Ms Aruna Asaf Ali and others and enterprising base level Congress leaders like Mr Ajoy Mukherjee in West Bengal's Midnapore district. Yet these details appear to be forgotten when the Congress claims credit for its patriotism and continues to dub the communists as agents of British imperialism, with the latter hesitant to turn around and confront it.

The Congress has been happily calling the communists names for their earlier stand on Subhash Bose, but wasn't it Pandit Nehru who had announced that the nationalist leader would be hanged if he set foot on Indian soil?

This was entirely of a piece with the Congress leadership's studied neglect of the heroes of the naval mutiny in Bombay. And, of course, there is the history of the treatment meted out to Subhash Bose and his older



brother, Sarat Chandra Bose, by the Mahatma and his disciples like Pandit Nehru which forced the two to part company with the party.

If the communists denunciation of Subhash Bose for landing up in the fascist camp was a little too harsh, the Congress certainly cannot claim to have been any friend of his. The continued rejection of pleas that his portrait find a place in the central hall of Parliament amply reveals the party's attitude towards the hero of INA [Indian National Army].

Bid to return to the communists, by "atoning" for their past "sins" they are in no way helping the present generation place the developments of the past in their proper perspective. The nation should have been told in no uncertain terms that by dubbing fascism as the gravest danger of all, the CPI had done nothing wrong.

Indeed this is relevant even today with fascist forces seeking to rear their heads both inside the country and outside it. But with their movement still restricted to a few areas in the country, the communists have obviously decided that it is best to steer clear of controversies and create an impression of being repentant for past "sins" so as to gain acceptability, mainly among a largely untutored middle class.

This certainly is not an approach that does them much credit as Marxists. But perhaps this is the only way out for a movement which has failed to register growth with the masses.

#### **New Congress (I) Bill Barring Religion From Politics Viewed**

93AS1066C Varanasi AJ in Hindi 23 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Khuli Bahas: "This Will Cut Its Progress"]

[Text] This is a very strange debate and was started by the union home minister. A bill is being presented to separate religion from politics during the Parliament's monsoon session. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] considers this bill a conspiracy to obliterate its increasing political strength. The Congress Party says that the dangers to our nation's secular nature call for separating religion from politics. The BJP and the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] family parties say that if politics is not based on religion, it may as well be based on sin. They go as far as claiming that this step is being taken to suppress emerging feelings of Hinduism. The prime minister made a challenge (which he rarely does) in many public meetings, saying that he would not allow the abuse of religion in politics.

This appears very strange, because the arguments touted by the secular and non-secular political parties appear to be principled on the surface and to be two-headed. The final goal for both is the same: a strategy to take over the government.

The Congress Party, which talks about secularism, has a history of elections that is full of manipulation of religious feelings to gain votes. Did not the Congress Party, many years ago, run a religious leader, Raghav Das against Acharaya Narendar Dev in the Faizabad-Ayodhya constituency to take advantage of the people's religious feelings? Did not the Congress Party, after being successful in this effort, continue to take similar steps? The fact is that since that incident, during Rajiv Gandhi's time, and until Narasimha Rao's present era, the Congress may have never forsaken the use of religion in politics. Yes, one thing is true. When it took some steps, it did so by hiding behind some facade.

Now the BJP, the political descendant of the RSS family, has jumped into the political arena using religion as a weapon, and it appears that it is winning this battle. The reason is that all parties in the RSS family have been working following the Hinduism-based nationalism for several years. Using religion for political ends is their open policy, and gaining their goals in the name of religion is an acceptable standard for them. Inciting corruption, hatred, rage, revenge, violence, and all kinds of ugly human emotions is part of their strategy to attain their goals. Keeping their goals pure is ridiculous to them. It does not matter how much non-religious activity they have to be involved in to establish a religious state. They will do it with pride, because that is what they believe in. The respect and devotion that the people of our country have for Lord Rama will be used by these leaders to take over the Central Government. In order to realize this dream, the RSS family is breaking all the rules established by Lord Rama. "Victory to Rama" is not a slogan for raising feelings of devotion for Rama in the hearts of the people; it is being used to cause terror. In Ayodhya, through the use of the Rama's Temple construction issue, the desire for power reached a point that even the joint communique issued by the shankaracharyas in Shringeri could not put a brake on.

A question arises: Is the Congress Party honest about using religion in politics? Is it willing to permanently give up this tendency to use religion in politics as repentance and to admit to all the mistakes committed during the long history of elections, in which religion was repeatedly used in politics? Is the BJP really sincere about protecting religion, policies, and spiritual values in our country? The truth is that if the weakness of using religion in politics was not part of the Congress Party, then the conspiracy to tear down the disputed structure in Ayodhya would never have been successful. If the BJP's belief in religion was pure, then it would not have broken the promises it gave at various times and thrown Indian democracy, the Constitution, and legal conventions into the dust. At the same time, it would not have boasted in an embarrassing manner about its actions. The BJP is worried sick because of its concerns for religion, and it viewed even the massacre that took place on 6 December 1992 as realization of its goals. The fact is that the BJP and the Congress Party are at times two sides of the same coin, complementing each other.

The tragedy of the present problem is that the religion that carries the responsibility of raising people's awareness, helping mature people's mentalities, determining social policies, and pushing them toward higher plateaus is being used shamelessly for political purposes by all political parties, be they secularists, religious groups, or anyone else. The religious gurus who had to educate the people and the society about religion have become pawns in the hands of politicians.

Our country may never have been such a large political unit in our history. However, it has been able to be one unit from a cultural perspective, because holy men, philosophers, and worshipers had kept the society enlightened, and they also practiced the principles that they preached. They did not depend on the government. They had the influence of their moral strength on the society and the government. This process has given birth to an awareness among the people and the society that stopped people from moving toward unprincipled, anti-religious, and anti-human tendencies. The present corrupt political situation is eroding that inner knowledge, and there appears to be no moral power in this country to help clean up politics and establish policies. The flow of moral strength has weakened, because the whole society (including the religious gurus) has made the government omnipotent, and all are competing for its support.

It will not be possible to separate religion from politics until the process of making the individual and the society moral is led by a non-government entity, and not by state-supported or state-organized groups; and principled people with strong desire for reforms do not take the initiative. The proposed effort of the present central government to bar religion from politics is just a device to cut off the religious base of BJP politics. Both have the same goal: Taking over the central government.

### **Rao Government Seen Intensely Battered From Without, Within**

93AS1066A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
26 Jul 93 pp 1,7

[Article: "Government Facing Danger From Without, Within"]

[Text] The government faces danger from both within and without during the monsoon session of Parliament beginning on Monday. There is on one side the ritualistic no-confidence motion by the opposition, and on the other the internal campaign led by Arjun Singh showing lack of trust in the leadership. Efforts are being made by all sides to make sure that the Congress legislators attend this session. While all this is happening, there will be hearings about Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar's case on 8 August in the Supreme Court. The decision on this case relates to the role of Sharad Pawar in the drama being staged for the change of power in Congress, and it will become very prominent. At present, he is under court orders not to vote in the Lok Sabha.

The opposition is not a silent spectator in this drama that is unfolding in the Congress Party. The National Front and the Left Front, especially the Left Front, are playing their role in this game of the politics of pressure. The National Front and the Left Front believe that if the P.V. Narasimha Rao government leaves, there is the danger of mid-term elections. The meaning of this danger is the arrival of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] at the Center. On the other hand, there is the false competition led by the real opposition. It has two problems. First, it cannot openly endorse the Congress government, because of the new Harshad Mehta, Gold Star, and Bofors decisions. Because of the Ayodhya incident, the Congress Party received support for an extended period. In this situation, if the Congress Party leadership changes, then the face of the opposition would be saved from the stigma of supporting a corrupt person. The real opposition is under pressure, because it did not declare the BJP politically untouchable over the no-confidence motion. It hopes that the Congress will not change its present leadership because of its present problems.

On the other hand, it is believed that the environment for change in leadership in the Congress Party will be possible only if Sharad Pawar comes out openly. However, the news about Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar cooperating on this issue is not considered any more reliable than a rumor. If they are together, then their combined equation will be against Rao. Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has 86 legislators from the south, which is causing problems for the disgruntled members. The way eight legislators, most of them from the south, wrote letters to Mr. Rao on 21 July, made it clear that Mr. Rao's "fort of the south" is no longer impregnable. This is a major victory for the detractors. Mr. Rao disappointed his supporters by not filling up all positions before the monsoon session. The Congress members are gradually beginning to believe that Mr. Rao will not be able to carry them through the elections.

This situation is more dangerous to the Congress Party than it is to Mr. Rao. The minority government has not been able to find a supporter to protect it from the no-confidence motion. Ajit Singh's support for the Congress Party is not yet definite, and the Congress has to join some group because of this pressure. The session beginning on 26 July will continue through 27 August. Therefore, there will be many opportunities for the no-confidence motion, and this will put the government in serious danger. If the pressure of the opposition fails, then the conspiracies going on within the government party will move toward their goals because of the presence of the legislators in Delhi. We have to see when Mr. Rao is accused of involvement in the Gold Star and Harshad Mehta cases and how and which Congress legislators react to these in what way.

The ADMK [Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] will support the no-confidence motion. The Congress Party will feel challenged by it. The Janata Dal (Ajit group) has lost its majority already. Three Congress chief ministers met with Ajit Singh and asked for his endorsement. If

Ajit Singh supports the Congress Party in this environment, then he will be putting himself in major danger. It is believed that in the end he will tell his 20 legislators to vote in support of the no-confidence motion. The Congress government cannot survive after this. The major opposition parties have taken the same route over the no-confidence motion; however, they are not working cooperatively. Camps among various opposition parties are still pitted against each other. The National Front and the Left Front are being forced to play the role of the opposition, instead of the BJP. The National Front appears to be ready to help topple the government, and for the mid-term elections. The Left Front is hesitating. The National Front President, Nand Muri Tarak Ramrao, appealed today to the opposition in Hyderabad to unite in order to uproot the Congress government. He sent letters to all opposition leaders.

Congress leader Arjun Singh is also under pressure from the party to revolt. The Left Front is also trying to do the same thing. It is taking interest in the no-confidence motion for different reasons. It is not ready for the elections, and its strategy is very different. It wants to achieve two goals with the no-confidence motion: first, to remove Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao; and second, to cause a new polarization among political parties. Mr. Rao will be forced to submit his resignation if the no-confidence motion is passed. The president will ask the BJP to form a government. It will express its inability to do so and demand new elections. This will cause a period of uncertainty, and during that time, Congress can be forced to elect a new leader. That is what the Left Front is counting on now. Arjun Singh also considers this appropriate for himself. To make it possible, a section of the Congress Party might be absent when the vote is taken.

The government does not consider this challenge to be very serious. It is aiming to introduce a bill to separate religion from politics in order to divide the opposition. The government also prefers three other bills. These include the Delhi Municipal Corporation bill, the Human Rights Commission bill, and a bill related to the census. Actually, there are 23 bills in this list.

#### Courts Reject CPM Attempt To Silence Journalists

93AS1115B Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA  
in Bengali 29 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] Staff Reporter: The Alipore court has partially accepted ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA's appeal challenging the legitimacy of the chief minister's libel suit and, therefore, the case against the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA limited to two of its journalists was dismissed on Wednesday [27 July]. But the case against its editor Aveek Sarkar and publisher Pabitra Kumar Mukherjee will, however, continue.

In his order on the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA's demand that Chief Minister Jyoti Basu personally give his witness in the libel suit, Shaktipada Dutta—Alipore

district and sessions judge—said that at present this matter is not under consideration, it could be reviewed during the deliberations of the main case. Announcing this he ordered that the libel suit against the editor and publisher of the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA continue. When Jyotirindra Nath Roy, public prosecutor of the South 24 Paraganas district, made an appeal to keep the case in the court of Justice Dutta, the judge asked: "Where do I have the time?" At that time both Jyotirindra and Parimal Bhadra—government lawyer—went on insisting that the libel case should remain in that court. But ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA's lawyer Sushant Bandopadhyay said that they have no opinion on this issue and would accept whatever the court decides. Thereafter, the court fixed 9 August as the next hearing date.

#### August as the next hearing date.

A case against ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA was filed because its reports on relations between Rashid Khan—the principal culprit in the Bow Bazar bomb explosion case—and Chief Minister Jyoti Basu had damaged the prestige of the honorable chief minister. Justice Dutta in his order on Wednesday said: "The writ petition for the case submitted on 30 March on behalf of the government was not legal because its date had been advanced." Unfortunately, the court missed the mistake. As the writ petition of the state government was not legal, the case against the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA Limited and two of its journalists—Ashis Ghosh and Anindya Jana—was dismissed. However, the case against editor Aveek Sarkar and publisher Pabitra Kumar Mukherjee will continue, because the state government's writ petition was lawful.

During the hearing of the case, the court made a de facto acceptance of appeal containing ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA's statement, which said that the court admitted the chief minister's libel case without the official permission of the state government.

In his order on Wednesday on the allegation of fraud in court records provided by the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA, Judge Dutta said that the matter was investigated. His principal clerk submitted a report saying that, due to the pressure of work at the time of typing, the mistake was made inadvertently.

Regarding ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA's questioning the jurisdiction of this [Alipore] court in admitting the libel suit brought by the honorable chief minister, Justice Dutta in his Wednesday order said that the case Chief Minister Jyoti Basu has filed against the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA in the Calcutta High Court for compensation is his personal matter. In this court the libel suit was filed on behalf of the state government by the public prosecutor of the South 24 Paraganas district and, therefore, this court has the jurisdiction to admit it.



**Ennore: Massive Coal Production Negates Privatization***93AS0980E Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 5*

[Text] Madras—The much-publicised policy of privatisation has no takers so far as development of the Madras port is concerned. The Ministry of Surface Transport and the Madras Port Trust (MPT) had invited the private sector investments in the Rs.594 crore Ennore coal port.

"Initially the government wanted investment and management to be in the private sector. But now the investment agency is the MPT along with the Asian Development Bank. Nobody from the private sector came forward to take up investment in this project," a top official source told INDIAN EXPRESS.

Though the Government was reported to be keen to vest at least the management of the Ennore port in the private sector, it has found this proportion also running into rough weather. It is felt that the massive operation of handling 16 million tonnes of coal annually cannot be left to any entrepreneur. In any case, there have so far been no worthwhile offers from the private sector to take up the work.

It will, therefore, be left to the public sector to undertake management of the port—either the MPT will take up the responsibility or a new agency may be created for the purpose. "A decision on this will be taken at the appropriate time," the source said.

Scope for privatisation: The government's thinking is that the proposed container terminal expansion project of the Madras port will have enough scope for the private sector to take up handling work of the terminal.

The MPT/ADB's investment in the Ennore port will be confined to the breakwater system and the berth handling plant conveyer system. The Tamil Nadu Electricity Board will invest (about Rs.250 crore) in the handling systems for conveying coal from the port to the thermal station site (North Madras). The ADB has extended aid to the TNEB project also.

Simultaneously with the execution of the Ennore coal port, the Paradeep port in Orissa, which is the main coal loading point, is also being mechanised investing about Rs.590 crore, with aid from ADB.

High profits: The MPT's operations have been "profitable," with the "operating surplus" increasing to Rs.89 crore during the year 1992-93 from Rs.70 crore in 1991-92.

**Price Control: Effective Consumer Movement Sought***93AS0980I Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English  
6 Jul 93 p 8*

[Article by T.N. Pandey; quotation marks as published]

[Text] It is amusing to read about the threats for action that are being given to the industrialists and traders periodically from the ministerial levels for their failure to bring down the prices by passing on the excise duty concessions announced in 1993 budget to the consumers.

The Finance Minister and the Minister of Civil Supplies have held out such threats in the past and the result is that price hike in automobiles is on the anvil despite such threats! Rise in prices of sugar and tea is well known.

On June 7, A.K. Antony, while presiding over the second review meeting with industry representatives, gave a two-week ultimatum to trade and industry to submit 'concrete proof' of having passed on Rs.1,200 crore worth of excise rebates to consumers, and threatened that the government would take action in case the latter failed to live up to the government's expectations. According to him, selective action was already being contemplated against delinquent industries and ministries concerned are being directed to 'persuade' various sectors under their charge to rightfully pass on rebates to customers!

Such utterances merely show government's helplessness. It is nearly four months since the duty concessions have been in force and the government is not able to get these passed on to the consumers and is depending upon persuasive efforts. Giving time to show proof is merely a delaying tactic. Why can this simple exercise not be done by the government itself through the Bureau of Costs and Prices? A comparison of prices ruling on February 28 and today would by itself prove that the benefit has been pocketed by manufacturers and traders.

The crux of the matter is that such delaying tactics are being resorted to as face-saving devices because the government cannot take any action against those who do not pass on the duty benefits to the consumers. To outwit them, the government can do only two things viz., permit liberal import of commodities where duty concessions have not been passed on. However, this cannot be done because of meagre availability of foreign exchange.

The second course is to withdraw the concessions given as is being threatened. Such a step would hit the consumers further because the trade would further increase the prices to the extent of duty withdrawn and the government would not be able to do anything. Release from buffer stocks is also no solution to the problem.

There is no point in the government's empty threats and its getting exposed in the process. The remedy to get the concessions passed on lies with the consumers who can teach profiteers a lesson by boycotting the purchase of their goods.

Unfortunately, because of vast availability of easy money accumulated by tax evasion, smuggling, bribes, kickbacks, etc., people who can make impact to bring

down the prices are not bothered whether prices are reduced or not to the extent of duty concessions. As such, an effective consumer movement is not there. Hence the common man has no alternative but to suffer. Announcements like those made by A.K. Antony and the Finance Minister can bring no relief to him.

#### **Increasing Privatization Seen in Store For Nation** *93AS1067A Varanasi AJ in Hindi 19 Jul 93 p 6*

[Article by Dr. Bal Devraj Gupta: "Indian Economic Circumstances in the Direction of Privatization"]

[Text] By adopting a liberal economic policy, India has finally started to attract foreign investors. However, we have not seen any miracles that indicate that the cycle of development will move fast. If the wheel of liberal economic changes moves at the rate of the world economic circle in Southeast Asia, especially in China, then the process of human development will be boosted. The total population of India and China is almost half of the world's population.

Southeast Asia is very important in world politics from the perspective of population. No country can afford to ignore China. Its greatest success was implementing a strict and proper strategy in its economic development plans and controlling population growth within the framework of a proper social structure. China implemented these plans successfully. It has reduced its rate of population growth very effectively and has stopped its population growth. Western investors were impressed by China's policies and showed more interest in investing money in its long-range plans. Many industrialists took an interest only in China from among all Southeast Asian countries. They never took such an interest in our country, India.

#### **India: Many Problems**

As for the openness of the liberal economic system, there are many problems in India. For political and historical reasons, the routes for change and innovation are very complex here. In spite of this, India's economy is passing through a phase in which it has to move in the direction of globalization, because no country is presently able to stay in the situation of a frog in a well.

Our foreign trade is unbalanced. As a result, our economic situation is unenviable. The Soviet Union, which used the Indian rupee as an exchange currency, has totally disintegrated now. When our dream of becoming self-sufficient broke, we were already trapped in an economic vicious circle. In order to get out of it, we had only one option: make our production and services competitive in the international market. If we do not do that, we will be helpless.

#### **The New World Structure**

The disappearance of the clouds of the Cold War during the last decade indicates that the seed of the new world

economic system has been able to let its presence known. Every new system goes through a very difficult initial phase. The economic system is even more difficult to change. The Indian Government is now being forced to implement liberal policies in trade, business, and other economic areas. The era of jinxing development with the strategy of production is taking its last breath in India. Now that India is determined to take the path of unprecedented change, many countries in the world are still in the uncertainty felt in the post-1930s world depression era. Now the question arises: Should we go with the flow of change or, in a hurry, privatize all services and production, or should we move our liberal economic policies in the opposite direction? Problems as high as the Himalayas are facing us. We have reversed the direction of change, and planned progress is clearly visible to us. However, many vested interests will try to hinder this progress and change. They will try to define India's liberal economic policy in the context of being unassertive. Whether India has become self-sufficient by restricting imports is not clear; this did give birth to a "vested class" in India.

#### **Supporters of Control and Scarcity**

The vested class has pushed the poor countries toward total destruction. The liberalization of the Indian economy is naturally threatened by these people, who were benefiting from control, scarcity, and government control. These supporters of control and scarcity want to keep government control over production and commodities, so that they have more opportunity for looting the people. If all this is stopped, then their pockets will not be so hot, and their entourage will disappear. The professional politicians will also become insolvent. Therefore, this vested class will do anything to stop this change.

#### **The New Colonialism**

The professional politicians and the vested class in the country are trying to put the label of "new colonialism" over this new change and are expressing fears of the dark demons of economic slavery, so that the people will reject this change and join the long lines that go with the system of scarcity and control.

We have seen miracles in industry and agriculture during the last decade. New hopes were born as a result of increased production. Because of government interference and the policy of control, this economic development was hampered, and we could not fulfill our international promises. We were made liars in front of the world. As a result, we missed a golden opportunity. Mr. Ashok Ganguli, director of Britain Unilever, believes that India could not take advantage of the golden decade of the 1980s and that the country is not prepared for the new challenges of the 1990s.

Internal peace and law and order are very important for change and progress in a country. There are serious problems faced by many economic systems in the world

and new emerging units in Asia. The most serious problem is energy. The supply of electric power is diminishing, and reserves of coal and water are also decreasing. There is no doubt that India has made a lot of progress in communications technology. Rajiv Gandhi did some very important work by bringing Sam Patroda into the telephone industry. The telecommunications system, however, is currently insufficient. There is a great need for improvement of our road and railway transportation. In addition, we lack educated and skilled manpower. Environmental pollution is causing health problems here. In not only India, but almost all developing countries, the cities are under great developmental pressure. Wherever the social system failed in developing countries, efforts for privatization have been greatly effective. Both systems are passing through many difficult stages now. The economic system that causes the deterioration of the economy is a warning to India that it must modernize its economic system and economic infrastructure. Dr. Ashok Ganguli goes even four steps further, telling us the solution to this problem. He believes that India should not hesitate in starting cooperative ventures in specific areas with Japan, America, and European nations.

#### Privatization Efforts in India

Economists have suggested that the public sector industries started during Jawarhalal Nehru's time have become items of continuous loss. Under this privatization plan, the government will sell these public sector industries to the people. The citizens of India can buy them. It will not be enough to sell these to individuals. We have also seen the bad results of privatization. (Many private mills in Bombay have been closed, and many private industries are spread throughout the whole country.) The people have to modernize the public sector industries. At the same time, we have to develop the skills of the available manpower, and we must distribute technical information in technical areas to students through colleges, universities, and other educational institutions, including trade schools. Higher education will thus be limited to only qualified students. Once tied to employment, education will become more progressive. This will help save our country from serious danger.

After doing all this, if we still do not succeed in taking effective steps to control our population growth, newborn babies will endanger our future progress. We will kill them, and they will kill us. Their future and our present will become bleak. At present, India's first priority in national planning should be population control. If we want to protect ourselves from all kinds of control and poor administration, then we must control population growth. We must reduce the birth rate. Only then will all friendly nations be willing to help India at the international level. The important thing is that we help ourselves first.

#### Warning to Moderate Agricultural Bilaterals Sounded

93AS1114A NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi  
20 Jul 93 p 4

[Commentary by Radhanath Chaturvedi: "New Economic Policies and the Future of Agriculture"]

[Text] As soon as the new Central Government took power in June 1991, keeping in mind the precarious economic conditions, it announced new economic policies with a great deal of pomp and show. At the same time, it declared that it would give new direction to the agricultural sector. Recently, after finishing its two years, the Central Government discussed its achievements, not only on the electronic media, but also in newspapers by publishing large advertisements. It also published articles to let the people know about its achievements.

Agriculture was given an important place right after independence. It had been the preeminent goal of all the five-year plans. The reason was clear. Even today, agriculture provides employment to 70 percent of our country's labor force. It is their means for earning a living. About 35 percent of our GNP comes from agriculture. The major part of our exports also depends on our agriculture. The basic raw materials for industry was also provided by agriculture. That is how the industry runs.

One very important measurement of agricultural production is per-person consumption. During the fifties, per-person consumption of grain was 395 grams per diem. This has increased by 101 grams, and consumption at the end of the eighties had reached 496 grams per person per diem. The use of fertilizer has also increased. The Soviet Union no longer exists; however, after the United States and China, India is third in use of fertilizers. India leads the world for acreage used in growing pulses and cereals. It is number one in increasing the area used for growing cotton also.

In 1949-50, India's agricultural production was about 50.5 million tons. In 1989-90, this increased to 170 million tons. This year, production is expected to be more than 180 million tons. After the green revolution from 1967-68 to 1988-89, the rate of increase in agricultural production has been 2.64 percent per year. During this period, grain production increased from 90 million tons to 170 million tons. There have been major changes in growing crops also. For example, mung was not grown in the summer; it is being grown now.

Similarly, we started to grow soybeans. We also grow peanuts and sunflowers. The importance of these agricultural productions has increased significantly. We are also trying to grow a third crop between the rabi [spring] and kharif [autumn] crops. This will help increase resources in our country. Because of the increase in commercial products, such as jute, cotton, and sugar cane, the agricultural index increased by 21 percent in 1988-89 over the previous year. It further increased by 1.6 percent in 1989-90, and this can be called a minor



increase. The production of vegetable oil has also increased. In 1987, vegetable oil production was one million metric tons. The government claims that the increase in the production of daily use products has been a great help in the improvement of living standards. Now we do not have only two crops a year. As mentioned earlier, a third crop is grown during the summer, in between the rabi and kharif crops. During the kharif season, rice, millet, corn, other grains, as well as cotton, sugar cane, soybeans, and peanuts are grown. During the rabi crops, wheat, barely, gram, oil seeds, and mustard are grown. Corn, peanuts, and many other crops are grown during the third growth season.

Geographically, 329 million hectares of land are under agriculture. Statistics of about 92.7 percent of used land are available. According to these figures, in 1950-51 there were jungles on 40 million hectares of land. In 1986-87, this jungle area increased to 660 million hectares. This way, during that period, about 120 million hectares were under cultivation, which increased to more than 140 million hectares. Most of the land grows grains. Commercial agriculture production comes next.

This is a picture of optimistic agriculture development and production. After June 1991, however, according to one perspective, seeds of destruction have been sown in the area of agriculture. Our self-dependence in agriculture was unacceptable to the World Bank and the leaders of capitalist countries. They still cannot tolerate it. They are bent upon destroying India's self-dependence in the area of agriculture. The economists of this school of thought believe that the enemies of India want us to buy their rotten and unsalable grains. To attain this goal, they are tempting us with new loans, and the Western nations are trying to destroy India's agricultural production and distribution systems. They want to fatally attack it and destroy this whole system. The World Bank is repeatedly pressuring us to stop the subsidies given to Indian farmers for agricultural production. If it is not possible to do so immediately, these subsidies should at least be minimized. The Dunkel proposal points toward this. Even though Mr. Balram Jakhar, the central agriculture minister, has announced government subsidies for agricultural fertilizer to the tune of 7.6 billion rupees, the World Bank insists that this should be stopped. It says that if it is not possible to do so at once, it should at least be minimized.

What will happen if we stop agricultural subsidies? Exactly what the Western nations want. Agricultural production in India will decrease. The grains that people

need will not be available. They will suffer from malnutrition. The United States is pressuring India through the World Bank to stop subsidies. But what is it doing at home?

The United States has a huge budget deficit of \$40 billion. Still, it is giving millions of dollars in subsidies to its farmers. On the other hand, under foreign pressure, the Indian Government has established a committee under the chairmanship of Pratap Rao Bhonsle to consider stopping subsidies for fertilizer. This committee submitted a report on 20 August 1992. It recommended stopping subsidies for purchasing fertilizers based on phosphate and potash. The Parliament did not debate these recommendations. The government accepted them without any debate. During 1992-93, subsidies for fertilizer were reduced to 350 million rupees from 580 million rupees. The result was what we expected: Fertilizer prices increased.

Prices of potash and phosphate based fertilizers increased by 88 to 265 percent. In this competition among major farmers, small farmers did not have enough money to buy these expensive fertilizers. There was a major decrease in fertilizer consumption. It is true that agricultural production is expected to be over 180 million this year; however, the reduced use of fertilizer will affect future production. The experts believe that this production could be reduced by as much as 500,000 tons. Last year, India imported 300 million tons of wheat from other countries. Perhaps it will do the same this year. In 1960, the wheat we bought from the United States of America under PL 480 proved to be unwholesome for health. Perhaps the same is true now.

The Rajah Chalaiya Commission has recommended a ten percent production tax on pesticides, fertilizers, and all kinds of agricultural tools. This recommendation was made in the context of the new reforms and has not been implemented yet. It is definite that if taxes are increased according to this recommendation, then items necessary for agricultural production will become more expensive. This will be fatal for the Indian agriculture industry. We are standing on our own feet in the area of agriculture. It will not be the same in the future.

Increasing production and exports is appropriate for our country's prosperity. But taking suicidal steps under the influence of foreign powers is a very different story. In the context of new policies, the wrong steps we are taking to destroy our agricultural self-dependence must be stopped.

**Air Force Appoints K.S. Kaul As Chief**

93AS0980A Madras *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English  
6 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] New Delhi—War decorated Air Marshal S.K. Kaul has been appointed Chief of the Indian Air Force, it was announced on Monday.

He will succeed Air Chief Marshal N.C. Suri who retires on July 31.

Awarded the Mahavir Chakra in the 1971 Indo-Pak war Air Marshal Kaul is presently AOC-in-C Western Air Command.

He was commissioned in July 1954 in the fighter pilot squadron of the Air Force.—UNI

**Paper Urges Role for Private Sector in Defense Projects**

BK0408023893 Delhi *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English  
28 Jul 93 p 8

[Editorial: "No Free Lunches"]

[Text] The cancellation of the deal to transfer cryogenic technology from Russia to India has a number of lessons for this country. If civilian technologies are liable to invite sanctions from the rich and the powerful, what hope does India have of being able to import defence-related technologies? Of all the lessons none is more important than what it suggests to Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO): India has no choice but to follow the principle, 'do it yourself'. This message comes across as clearly as it possibly can. The 'friendship rates' and 'friendship treaty' are things of the past, as has just been demonstrated. Therefore, in order to retain its defence capability, and its defence industry, India will have to undertake a serious programme to indigenise. The exigency of the situation is such that the developed

world is increasingly likely to restrict sales of critical technologies. While orders for entire systems may still be accepted, chances of getting technology transfers are negligible.

Weapon systems require continued supplier support, but technology transfer leads to self-sufficiency. But above all, it is mastery over critical technologies, which opens a vast arena of possibilities for the users, that gives the developed world its advantage. It is mastery which India must seek to acquire in all critical areas. But success would depend upon incentives, resources and motivation. So far India has mainly done only reverse engineering, hardly a reflection of its potentials, or of initiative. DRDO has made progress, but tardy at best. The cynical view is that DRDO projects are never completed because that would mean the end of the job for scientists involved. Though a bit harsh; it nevertheless is a view entertained by many officers of the armed forces. To yield results, promotion on the basis of performance could be instituted. A scientist would then make the next grade only after progress of the project was verified.

DRDO projects currently need substantial imported components to get off the ground. While one can understand these being required for the short-term completion of a project, the need for continued supplies for production is cause for worry. The Arjun tank project and the Light Combat Aircraft continue to require imported components. The vital fire control system of Arjun is manufactured by Oldef, a company now owned by an American corporation. Is there any guarantee that supplies would be continued, or even if they were, at what price? DRDO must wake up to these fundamental concerns. No one agency has all the answers to the nation's needs, and therefore, DRDO will not be able to provide all items needed. It is time to bring in the private sector, to research, develop, and produce technologies needed for India's defence services. But, above all to thoroughly indigenise defence in India, for there are no free lunches available anymore.

### Muslim Women Said Organizing Against Shariah Laws

93AS1033H New Delhi ORGANISER in English  
11 Jul 93 p 7

[Article by Muzaffar Hussain: "Avaj To Voice Muslim Women's Distress"]

[Text] This is a tale from Vikhroli, a suburb of Bombay. A 55 to 60-year-old woman of the Jamnagarwala family visits me. She is accompanied by a thirty-year-old young man, her son. Her husband, an engineer, has planned to divorce her. He has made all the arrangements for the divorce case. Mr Jamnagarwala's two brothers pleaded with him. But he refuses to depart from his chartered course. His priest, who calls himself mukasir (in-charge of division) and who operates from his Badri Mahal residence in Bombay's Fort area, advises the poor woman that she has no other option but to accept divorce and go away, as her husband does not wish to keep her in his house. He has a right to forcibly evict her from his office after obtaining a divorce. The miserable woman accepts her fate as an estranged wife, but appeals for some support for her maintenance. The priest curtly says, she would receive amount enough for maintenance during three months out of the four months and ten days she is entitled to under iddat. Nothing more. Her son does not want that his mother be divorced. He demands his share of the family property, so that he can keep his mother in his own house. Both the father and his religious guide are silent over this. Award on her divorce was expected by the first week of May. Neighbours of Mrs. Jamnagarwala sympathise with her. They intercede with her husband on her behalf. But he is too slippery to come to grips. Women of her neighbourhood are solidly behind her. They are even prepared to challenge her husband to dare stay in the mohulla with his new wife. But though Mrs Jamnagarwala is a bold woman and intends to prove her mettle, when she considers her legal position she feels herself helpless and forlorn. In the case of divorce Shariat has provided complete licence to the male. And now India's laws also do not come to the help of the miserable Muslim divorcee women.

There was a time when divorce came under Section 125 of the criminal law. The section applied to all women of the country irrespective of their faith. But since the Shah Bano case, Rajiv Gandhi's rule introduced a new law misnamed Muslim Women Security Act, under which a Muslim woman divorcee cannot demand her natural right to maintenance till her second marriage. She can claim maintenance only up to four months and ten days from the date of her divorce.

After that period she may be provided for either by her blood relations on the Waqf Board. In other words, the

husband is exempted from his natural obligation and the taxpayers have to finance her maintenance.

In the matter of divorce the Muslim male, abetted by our government, is so cruel that he is not prepared even to consider the issue on humanitarian plane. The government blinded by political motives is equally impervious to the plight of the Muslim women. The luckless Shah Bano could not collect even her rightful three thousand silver coins she was promised as mehar. And now comes the Lucknow bench award in the Hamidan case in which her husband did not care even to sue for divorce and when he was dragged in a court of law for maintenance her husband boldly declared that he had divorced her and so she was not entitled to any maintenance, tacitly declaring that a divorce can be effective as and when the husband pleases without a court's endorsement.

In India the monopoly of preserving Shariat is enjoyed by a board called Muslim Personal Law Board. Who gave birth to this body? How was it constituted? There is no answer to these queries! There are no elections to any seats on this body. The members of this obscure body never go about in the Muslim masses to assess the extent of injustice perpetrated under the sacred name of Shariat. The Government of India has not formally recognised it. But the government is so scared of this body that it does not dare inquire into its locus standi. Its maulanas come together and merrily pronounce their arbitrary fatwas on any matter related to hadis, niqah or Quran and compel the concerned sect to implement their fatwas. If the Board pleases to oppose any law the government promptly amends the law to suit the Board's pleasure. You may, if you choose, call this a parallel Muslim parliament. It does not entertain any woman member. It is constituted by a handful of senile politicians and a few maulanas strutting as monopoly interpreters of Shariat and make changes in its composition as they deem fit. The so-called self-proclaimed Muslim intellectuals too become speechless against this Board. In India this Personal Law Board has become a holy cow and to criticise or act against it is considered sacrilege against Shariat and anti-Islam. Anyone who dares to open his mouth against the Board is automatically proclaimed anti-social and an enemy of Islam.

So far as the matter of divorce on arbitrary and flimsy grounds is concerned, the government cannot—or will not—prevent the Muslim males aided and abetted by the Muslim Personal Law Board, from effecting it. But the large Muslim female population can organise and raise their voice unitedly against this unjust law and practice. Muslim woman power can bring down the edifice of Muslim male chauvinism. In this context a strong organisation of women is needed which will not divide the woman power between Muslim women and non-Muslim women. It will appeal to the Mother in them and organise them on that basis irrespective of their faith.



### Hindi Claimed Capable of Communicating Technology, Science

93AS1066B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi  
26 Jul 93 p 4

[Article by Ramchandra Mishra: "Who Says Hindi is Abstruse"]

[Text] It is a very ironic that the country that is number five in the world in the number of scientists and technicians and is moving toward equality with advanced countries in communications, and in which Hindi is the national language, is very backward in using its own language in the area of science. We cannot deny the importance of English in higher education and research, but we also cannot ignore the use of Hindi in spreading technology, popular education, business, trade, and other areas. In this present era of globalization, when foreigners are trying to learn Hindi, our own habit of ignoring Hindi will prove us to be inferior.

Non-Hindi speakers, because of their anti-Hindi feeling, want to keep themselves away from Hindi. Hindi speakers, meanwhile, because of their low self-esteem and apathy, hesitate to use the language, especially if they are asked to speak on a technical issue in Hindi. They suddenly become quiet and say that Hindi is difficult. The truth is that the people from both these groups are ignoring reality and are propagating the idea that Hindi is not fully developed. They argue that the new and modern vocabulary of Hindi is awkward and difficult. When they are asked why these words are difficult, they reply that they are not used much. Here is the solution to the problem: Use Hindi, and it will become easy.

We admit that it is important to make Hindi simpler; however, it is regrettable that this issue is argued about a lot, and that no meaningful discussion has taken place. The government machinery, leaders, and ministers often prescribe that we make Hindi simpler, not use Sanskrit, and be liberal in adopting English words. They also recommend some input from Urdu and the adoption of the Hindustani language also. Let us pay a little more attention to these wonderful ideas and learn how hollow and redundant they are. One interesting prescription advises that the Hindustani language be written in Roman script, which will help spread Hindi to every corner of the country. Obviously, all of these ideas are spread to mislead people.

We are often amazed when we think about why Hindi is considered a poisonous sip, and English, which is actually the poisonous sip, goes down the throat so easily. The reason for this is not new, and nor is our educated society unaware of it. English and other rich European languages gradually prospered, along with their technical and scientific progress. In spite of their technical nature, these languages are easy, day-to-day languages for people who are mostly educated. Comparatively speaking, there is no direct relationship in the progress of Hindi and of science,

technical, and industrial progress in our nation, because most knowledge and science has come from abroad in the English language. Therefore, we Indians devour the poisonous drink of the English language. People have adamantly assured themselves that one must be an expert in English in order to be a technical expert.

The Scientific and Technical Vocabulary commission of the Government of India has developed over one-half million words in the area of science, technology, administration, and humanities. They are also trying to encourage their use. The invention of new Hindi words happens after research and deliberation by scholarly linguists and experts in subject areas. It has been kept in mind that these words are easily understood and used, and there is no contradiction between the commonly accepted and specific meanings. Just as the value of a new coin is decided after testing it in the market, the meanings of these new words become acceptable only after continuous use. The appearance of difficulty is caused by circumstances and is related to individual experience. The truth is that science is not the monopoly of any specific language, but is the result of hard work, and communicating science through a language is part of this dedication.

The practice of implementing Hindi just to follow the national language law is being done with dishonesty, and Hindi is not even moving with the speed of a turtle. The engine that pulls Hindi, which is also known as the National Commission, sits in five-star hotels and takes care of the language in a hurry. The presidential directive, based on the Parliament's national language committee, was issued a long time ago. According to it, research work in Hindi in science and technology was to be published in Hindi, and arrangements were to be made to educate the technical manpower in the use of Hindi. Except for a few people, no one knows about these directives. Are all of these practices ritualistic?

The advice not to use Sanskrit vocabulary, so that Hindi remains simple, is the result of one's staying in the dark. It was possible to develop 500,000 Hindi words, because of the use of more than 500,000 root words, prefixes, and suffixes of Sanskrit. Sanskrit is the mother of all Indian languages, perhaps with one exception. If the modernization of Hindi is achieved with the help of Sanskrit, then why should we avoid Sanskrit? It is important to note that we Indians learn foreign languages, such as French, German, Arabic, and Russian, very comfortably. As for the question of using vocabulary from other Indian languages, it was done while we developed the vocabulary, and this gives an all-India quality to the language.

How much English should be mixed into Hindi, for its so-called simplification is not a matter of personal taste. It has been made clear in the vocabulary rules that some common English words should be accepted in English form, and these could be transcribed into Hindi and other Indian languages. These words should not be

difficult, and should not require specific markers in Devanagiri script. When we transcribe English words into Devanagiri script, we must keep in mind that the pronunciations should be close to standard English. Almost all modern languages in the world are replete with English vocabulary. Using such necessary foreign words in Hindi should not be considered a weakness of the Hindi language, because it is necessary to establish international language standards.

Literary language is pure, mature, beautiful, relishable, or magical. Bureaucratic language is brief, objective, and standard. In colloquial form, the social language is easy, simple, and communicable. Diplomatic language must be able to adopt diplomatic protocol. Scientific and technical language is developed for specialists, and is full of definitions, words, aphorisms, markers, and so on. Depending on the above definitions, the form of Hindi for which you prepare yourself will appear easiest to you.

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